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B E L L ' s

BRITISH THEATRE.

VOLUME THE EIGHTEENTH.

1850

BRITISH THEATRE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

Bell's British Theatre;
TRAGEDIES.



Mortimer del.

Hall Scul.

R. H. D. D. D. D.

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange.
Strand.



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B E L L ' s

BRITISH THEATRE,

Consisting of the most esteemed

ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOLUME THE EIGHTEENTH.

Being the Ninth VOLUME of TRAGEDIES.

CONTAINING

- SOPHONISBA, by Mr. THOMSON.
PHILASTER, altered from BEAUMONT & FLETCHER.
VIRGINIA, by Mr. CRISP.
GUSTAVUS VASA, by HENRY BROOKE, Esq.
ULYSSES, by N. ROWE, Esq.

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BRITISH THEATRE

ENGLISH PLAYS

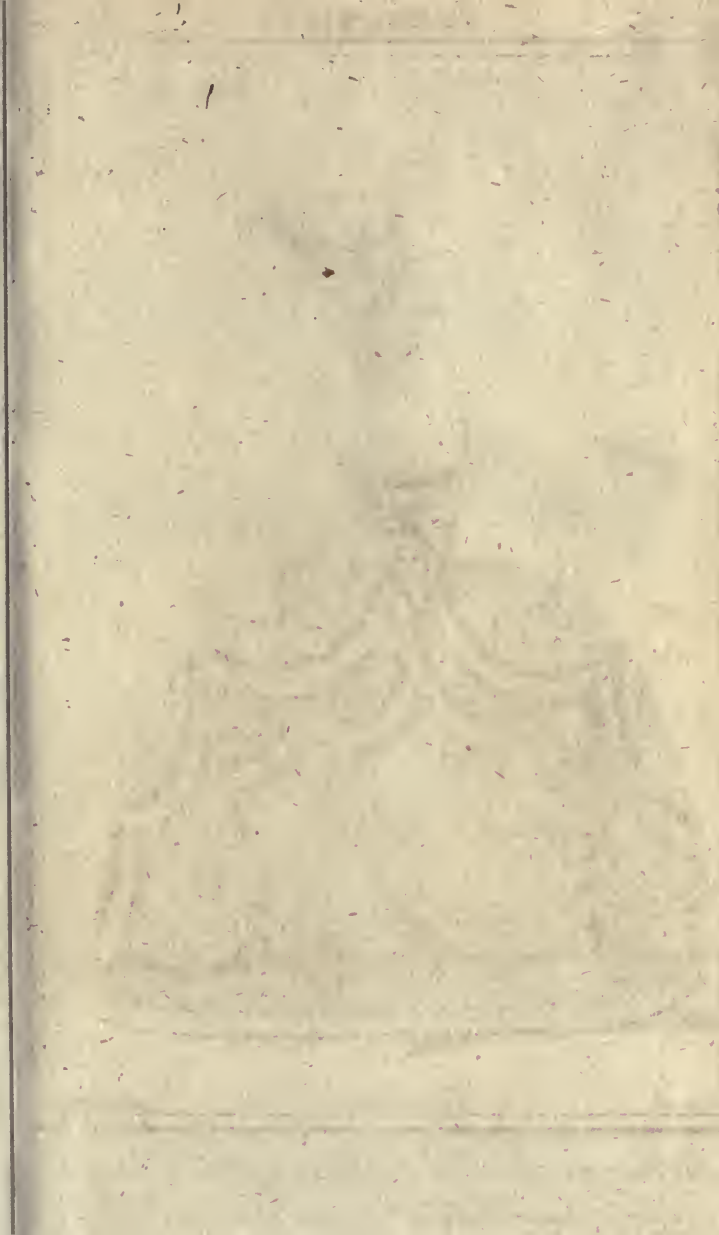
Being the First Volume of the Series

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LONDON

Printed by J. B. Nichols, 10, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2





Roberts del.

Published as the Act directs, Decr 1778.

Thornthwaite Sculp.

*M^{rs} BARRY in the Character of SOPHONISBA.
 Assure him that I drank it, drank it all,*

BELL'S EDITION.



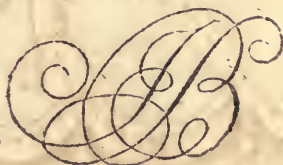
SOPHONISBA.

A TRAGEDY.

As written by Mr. THOMSON.

AND PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.



LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVIII.

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

RECORDS OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

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3732
566
1778

T O T H E

Q U E E N.

MADAM,

THE notice your Majesty has condescended to take of the following tragedy, emboldens me to lay it, in the humblest manner, at your Majesty's feet. And to whom can this illustrious Carthaginian so properly fly for protection, as to a Queen, who commands the hearts of a people, more powerful at sea than Carthage, more flourishing in commerce than those first merchants, more secure against conquest, and, under a monarchy more free than a common-wealth itself.

I dare not, nor indeed need I here attempt a character, where both the great and the amiable qualities shine forth in full perfection. All words are faint to speak what is universally felt and acknowledged by a happy people. Permit me therefore only to subscribe myself, with the truest zeal and veneration,

MADAM,

Your Majesty's

Most humble,

Most dutiful, and

Most devoted servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

P R E F A C E.

IT is not my intention, in this preface, to defend any faults that may be found in the following piece. I am afraid there are too many: but those who are best able to discover, will be most ready to pardon them. They alone know how difficult an undertaking the writing of a tragedy is: and this is a first attempt.

I beg leave only to mention the reason that determined me to make choice of this subject. What pleased me particularly, tho' perhaps it will not be least liable to objection with ordinary readers, was the great simplicity of the story. It is one, regular, and uniform, not charged with a multiplicity of incidents, and yet affording several revolutions of fortune; by which the passions may be excited, varied, and driven to their full tumult of emotion.

This unity of design was always sought after, and admired by the antients: and the most eminent among the moderns, who understood their writings, have chosen to imitate them in this, from an intire conviction that the reason of it must hold good in all ages. And here allow me to translate a passage from the celebrated Monsieur Racine, which contains all that I have to say on this head.

‘ We must not fancy that this rule has no other foundation but the caprice of those who made it. Nothing can touch us in tragedy, but what is probable. And what probability is there, that, in one day, should happen a multitude of things, which could scarce happen in several weeks? There are some who think that this simplicity is a mark of barrenness of invention. But they do not consider, that, on the contrary, invention consists in making something out of nothing: and that this huddle of incidents has always been the refuge of poets, who did not find in their genius either richness

‘ or force enough to engage their spectators, for five acts together, by a simple action, supported by the violence of passions, the beauty of sentiments, and the nobleness of expression.’—I would not be understood to mean that all these things are to be found in my performance: I only shew the reader what I aimed at, and how I would have pleased him, had it been in my power.

As to the character of Sophonisba; in drawing it, I have confined myself to the truth of history. It were an affront to the age, to suppose such a character out of nature; especially in a country which has produced so many great examples of public spirit and heroic virtues, even in the softer sex: and I had destroyed her character intirely, had I not marked it with that strong love to her country, disdain of servitude, and inborn aversion to the Romans, by which all historians have distinguished her. Nor ought her marrying Masinissa, while her former husband was still alive, to be reckoned a blemish in her character. For, by the laws both of Rome and Carthage, the captivity of the husband dissolved the marriage of course; as among us impotence, or adultery: not to mention the reasons of a moral and public nature, which I have put into her own mouth in the scene between her and Syphax.

This is all I have to say of the play itself. But I cannot conclude without owning my obligations to those concerned in the representation. They have indeed done me more than justice. Whatever was designed as amiable and engaging in Masinissa shines out in Mr. Wilks’s action. Mrs. Oldfield, in the character of Sophonisba, has excelled what, even in the fondness of an author, I could either wish or imagine. The grace, dignity, and happy variety of her action have been universally applauded, and are truly admirable.



P R O L O G U E.

By a FRIEND.

WHEN learning, after the long Gothic night,
Fair, o'er the western world, renew'd his light,
With arts arising Sophonisba rose:

The tragic muse, returning, wept her woes.

With her th' Italian scene first learnt to glow:

And the first tears for her were taught to flow:

Her charms the Gallic muses next inspir'd:

Corneille himself saw, wonder'd, and was fir'd.

What foreign theatres with pride have shewn,

Britain, by juster title, makes her own.

When freedom is the cause, 'tis hers to fight;

And hers, when freedom is the theme, to write.

For this, a British author bids again

The heroine rise, to grace the British scene.

Here, as in life, she breathes her genuine flame:

She asks what bosom has not felt the same?

Asks of the British youth—Is silence there?

She dares to ask it of the British fair.

To-night, our home-spun author would be true,

At once, to nature, history, and you.

Well-pleas'd to give our neighbours due applause,

He owns their learning, but disdains their laws.

Not to his patient touch, or happy flame;

'Tis to his British heart he trusts for fame.

If France excel him in one free-born thought,

The man, as well as poet, is in fault.

Nature! informer of the poet's art,

Whose force alone can raise or melt the heart,

Thou art his guide; each passion, every line,

Whate'er he draws to please, must all be thine.

Be thou his judge: in every candid breast,

Thy silent whisper is the sacred test.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N A E.

M E N.

Masinissa, King of *Massylia*.
Syphax, King of *Masælylia*.
Narva, friend to *Masinissa*.
Scipio, the Roman General.
Lælius, his Lieutenant.

W O M E N.

Sophonisba, ————— Mrs. Barry.
Pbænissa, her Friend.

Messenger, Slave, Guards and Attendants.

S C E N E, The Palace of *CIRTHA*.

S O P H O N I S B A.

A C T I.

Enter Sophonisba and Phœnissa.

SOPHONISBA.

THIS hour, Phœnissa, this important hour,
 Or fixes me a queen, or from a throne
 Throws Sophonisba into Roman chains.
 Detested thought ! For now his utmost force
 Collected; desperate, distress'd, and fore
 From battles lost; with all the rage of war,
 Ill-fated Syphax makes his last effort.
 But say, thou partner of my hopes and fears,
 Phœnissa, say; while, from the lofty tower,
 Our straining eyes the field of battle sought,
 Ah, thought you not that our Numidian troops
 Gave up the broken field, and scattering fled,
 Wild o'er the hills, from the rapacious sons
 Of still triumphant Rome ?

Phœn. The dream of care !

And think not, Madam, Syphax can resign,
 But with his ebbing life, in this last field,
 A crown, a kingdom, and a queen he loves
 Beyond ambition's brightest wish; for whom,
 Nor mov'd by threats, nor bound by plighted faith,
 He scorn'd the Roman friendship (that fair name
 For slavery) and from th' engagements broke
 Of Scipio, fam'd for every winning art,
 The towering genius of recover'd Rome.

Soph. Oh, name him not ! These Romans stir my blood
 To too much rage. I cannot bear the fortune
 Of that proud people.—Said you not, Phœnissa,
 That Syphax lov'd me; which would fire his battle,
 And urge him on to death or conquest ? True,

He

He loves me with the madness of desire ;
 His every passion is a slave to love ;
 Nor heeds he danger where I bid him go,
 Nor leagues nor interest. Hence these endless wars,
 These ravag'd countries, these successful fights,
 Sustain'd for Carthage ; whose defence alone
 Engag'd my loveless marriage-vows with his.
 But know you not, that in the Roman camp
 I have a lover too ; a gallant, brave,
 And disappointed lover, full of wrath,
 Returning to a kingdom whence the sword
 Of Syphax drove him ?

Phœn. Masinissa ?

Soph. He :

Young Masinissa, the Massylian King,
 The first addresser of my youth ; for whom
 My bosom felt a fond beginning wish,
 Extinguish'd soon : when once to Scipio's side
 Won o'er, and dazzled by th' enchanting glare
 Of that fair seeming hero, he became
 A gay admiring slave, yet knew it not.
 E'er since, my heart has held him in contempt ;
 And thrown out each idea of his worth,
 That there began to grow : nay had it been
 As all-possess, and soft, as hers who sits
 In secret shades, or by the falling stream,
 And wastes her being in unutter'd pangs,
 I would have broke, or cur'd it of its fondness.

Phœn. Heroic Sophonisba !

Soph. No, Phœnissa ;

It is not for the daughter of great Asdrubal,
 Descended from a long illustrious line
 Of Carthaginian heroes, who have oft
 Fill'd Italy with terror and dismay,
 And shook the walls of Rome, to pine in love,
 Like a deluded maid ; to give her life,
 And heart high-beating in her country's cause,
 Meant not for common aims and household cares,
 To give them up to vain presuming man ;
 Much less to one who stoops the neck to Rome,
 An enemy to Carthage, Masinissa.

Phœn.

Phœn. Think not I mean to check that glorious flame,
 That just ambition which exalts your soul,
 Fires on your cheek, and lightens in your eye.
 Yet would he had been yours! this rising prince;
 For, trust me, fame is fond of Masinissa.
 His various fortune, his resplendent deeds,
 His courage, conduct, deep-experienc'd youth,
 And vast unbroken spirit in distress,
 Still rising stronger from the last defeat.
 Are all the talk and terror too of Afric.
 Who has not heard the story of his woes!
 How hard he came to his paternal reign;
 Whence soon by Syphax' unrelenting hate,
 And jealous Carthage driven, he with a few
 Fled to the mountains. Then, I think, it was,
 Hem'd in a circle of impending rocks,
 That all his followers fell, save fifty horse;
 Who, thence escap'd, thro' secret paths abrupt,
 Gain'd the Clupean plain. There overtook,
 And urg'd by fierce surrounding foes, he burst
 With four alone, fore-wounded, thro' their ranks,
 And all amidst a mighty torrent plung'd.
 Seiz'd by the whirling gulph, two sunk; and two,
 With him, obliquely hurried down the stream,
 Wrought to the farther shore. Th' astonish'd troops
 Stood check'd, and shivering on the gloomy brink,
 And deem'd him lost in the devouring flood.
 Mean time the dauntless, undespairing youth
 Lay in a cave conceal'd; curing his wounds
 With mountain-herbs, and on his horses fed:
 Nor here, even at the lowest ebb of life,
 Stoop'd his aspiring mind. What need I say,
 How once again restor'd, and once again
 Expell'd, among the Garamantian hills
 He since has wander'd, till the Roman arm
 Reviv'd his cause? And who shall reign alone,
 Syphax or he, this day decides.

Soph. Enough.

Thou need'st not blazon thus his fame, Phœnissa.
 Were he as glorious as the pride of woman
 Could wish, in all her wantonness of thought;
 The joy of human kind: wise, valiant, good;

With every praise, with every laurel crown' ;
 The warrior's wonder, and the virgin's sigh :
 Yet this would cloud him o'er, this blemish all ;
 His mean submission to the Roman yoke ;
 That, false to Carthage, Afric, and himself,
 With proffer'd hand and knee, he hither led
 These ravagers of earth.—But while we talk,
 The work of fate goes on ; even now perhaps
 My dying country bleeds in every vein,
 And the warm victor thunders at our gate.

Enter a Messenger from the battle.

Soph. Ha ! Whence art thou ? Speak, tho' thy bleed-
 Might well excuse thy tongue. [ing wounds

Mess. Madam, escap'd,
 With much ado, from yon wide death—

Soph. No more.

At once thy meaning flashes o'er my soul.
 Oh, all my vanish'd hopes ! Repairless chance
 Of undiscerning war !—And is all lost ?
 An universal havock ?

Mess. Madam, all.

For scarce a Masæfylian, save myself,
 But is or seiz'd, or bites the bloody plain.
 The King—

Soph. Ah ! what of him ?

Mess. His fiery steed,
 By Masinissa, the Massylian prince,
 Pierc'd, threw him headlong to his clustering foes ;
 And now he comes in chains.

Soph. 'Tis wond'rous fit,
 Absolute gods ! All Afric is in chains !
 The weeping world in chains ! Oh, is there not
 A time, a righteous time, reserv'd in fate,
 When these oppressors of mankind shall feel
 The miseries they give ; and blindly fight
 For their own fetters too ?—The conquering troops,
 How points their motion ?

Mess. At my heels they came,
 Loud-shouting, dreadful, in a cloud of dust,
 By Masinissa headed.

[Shout.
 Sopl.

Soph. Hark! arrived.

The murm'ring crowd rolls frighted to the palace.
 Thou bleed'st to death, poor faithful wretch; away,
 And dress thy wounds, if life be worth thy care:
 Though Rome, methinks, will lose a slave in thee.
 Would Sophonisba were as near the verge [Exit Mess.
 Of boundless, and immortal liberty! [Pauses.
 And wherefore not? When liberty is lost,
 Let slaves and cowards live; but in the brave
 It were a treachery to themselves, enough
 To merit chains. And is it fit for me,
 Who in my veins, from Asdrubal deriv'd,
 Hold Carthaginian enmity to Rome;
 On whom I've lavish'd all my burning soul,
 In everlasting hate; for whose destruction
 I sold my joyless youth to Syphax' arms,
 And turn'd him fierce upon them; fit for such
 A native, restless, unrelenting foe,
 To sit down softly-pensive, and await
 Th' approaching victor's rage; reserv'd in chains
 To grace his triumph, and become the scorn
 Of every Roman dame—Gods! how my soul
 Disdains the thought! and this shall set it free.

[Offers to stab herself.

Phœn. Hold, Sophonisba, hold! my friend! my queen!
 For whom alone I live! hold your rash point,
 Nor through your guardian bosom stab your country.
 That is our last resort, and always sure.
 The gracious gods are liberal of death;
 To that last blessing lend a thousand ways.
 Think not I'd have you live to drag a chain,
 And walk the triumph of insulting Rome.
 No, by these tears of loyalty and love,
 Ere I beheld so vile a sight, this hand
 Should urge the faithful poniard to your heart,
 And glory in the deed. But, while hope lives,
 Let not the generous die. 'Tis late before
 The brave despair.

Soph. Thou copy of my soul!
 And now my friend indeed! Shew me but hope,
 One glimpse of hope, and I'll renew my toils,
 Call patience, labour, fortitude again,

The next unjoyous day, and sleepless night ;
 Nor shrink at danger, any shape of death,
 Shew me the smallest hope ! Alas, Phœnissa,
 Too kindly confident ! Hope lives not here,
 Fled with her sister Liberty beyond
 The Garamantian hills, to some steep wild,
 Some undiscover'd country, where the foot
 Of Roman cannot come.

Phœn. Yes, there she liv'd
 With Masinissa wounded, and forlorn,
 Amidst the serpent's hiss, and tiger's yell.—

Soph. Why nam'st thou him ?

Phœn. Madam, in this forgive
 My forward zeal ; from him proceeds our hope.
 He lov'd you once ; nor is your form impair'd,
 Warm'd, and unfolded into stronger charms :
 Ask his protection from the Roman power,
 You must prevail ; for Sophonisba sure
 From Masinissa cannot ask in vain.

Soph. Now, by the prompting genius of my country !
 I thank thee for the thought. True, there is pain
 Ev'n in descending thus to beg protection
 From that degenerate youth. But, Oh, for thee,
 My sinking country ! and again to gaul
 This hated Rome, what would I not endure ?
 It shall be done, Phœnissa ; though disgust
 Choak'd up my struggling meaning, shall be done.

[*Kneels:*

But here I vow, propitious Juno, hear !
 Could every pomp and every pleasure join'd,
 Love, empire, glory, a whole kneeling world,
 Unnerve my smallest purpose, and remit
 That most inveterate enmity I bear
 The Roman state ; may Carthage smother in ruins !
 Rome rise the mistress of mankind ! and I,
 There an abandon'd slave, drag out a length
 Of life, in loathsome baseness and contempt !
 This way the trumpet sounds ; let us retire.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Masinissa, Syphax in chains, Narva, Guards, &c.

Syph. Is there no dungeon in this city, dark
 As is my troubled soul, that thus I'm brought
 To my own palace, to those rooms of state,

Wont in another manner to receive me,
With other signs of royalty than these?

[*Looking on his chains.*]

Maf. I will not wound thee, nor insult thee, Syphax,
With a recital of thy tyrant crimes.
A captive here I see thee, fallen below
My most revengeful wish; and all the rage,
The noble fury that inspir'd this morn,
Is sunk to soft compassion. In the field,
The flaming front of war, there is the scene
Of brave revenge; and I have fought thee there,
Keen as the hunted lion seeks his foe.
But when a broken enemy, disarm'd,
And helpless lies; a falling sword, an eye
With pity flowing, and an arm as weak
As infant softness, then becomes the brave.
Now sleeps the sword; the passions of the field
Subside to peace; and my relenting soul
Melts at thy fate.

Syph. This, this, is all I dread,
All I detest, this insolence refin'd,
This barbarous pity, this affected goodness.
Pitied by thee!——Is there a form of death,
Of torture, and of infamy like that?
It kills my very soul!——Ye partial gods!
I feel your worst; why should I fear you more?
Hear me, vain youth! take notice——I abhor
Thy mercy, loath it.——Poison to my thoughts!
Wouldst thou be merciful? One way alone
Thou canst oblige me.—Use me like a slave;
As I would thee, (delicious thought!) wert thou
Here crouching in my power.

Maf. Outrageous man!
If that is mercy, I'll be cruel still.
Nor canst thou drive me, by thy bitterest rage,
To an unmanly deed; not all thy wrongs,
Nor this worse triumph in them.

Syph. Ha! ha! wrongs?
I cannot wrong thee. When we lanch the spear
Into the monster's heart, or crush the serpent;
Destroy what in antipathy we hold,

The common foe ; can that be call'd a wrong ?
Injurious that ? Absurd ! it cannot be.

Maf. I'm loth to hurt thee more.—The tyrant works
Too fierce already in thy rankled breast.

But since thou seem'st to rank me with thyself,
With great destroyers, with perfidious kings ;

I must reply to thy licentious tongue,

Bid thee remember, whose accursed sword
Began this work of death ; who broke the ties,

The holy ties, attested by the gods,

Which bind the nations in the bond of peace ;

Who meanly took advantage of my youth,

Unskill'd in arms, unsettled on my throne,

And drove me to the desert, there to dwell

With kinder monsters ; who my cities sack'd,

My country pillag'd, and my subjects murder'd ;

Who still pursu'd me with inveterate hate,

When generous force prov'd vain, with ruffian arts,

The villain's dagger, base assassination ;

And for no reason all. Brute violence

Alone thy plea.—What the least provocation,

Say, canst thou but pretend ?

Syph. I pceded none.

Nature has in my being sown the seeds

Of enmity to thine. — Nay, mark me this ;

Couldst thou restore me to my former state,

Strike off these chains, give me the sword again,

The sceptre, and the wide-obedient war :

Yet must I still, implacable to thee,

Seek eagerly thy death, or die myself.

Life cannot hold us both ! — Unequal gods !

Who love to disappoint mankind, and take

All vengeance to yourselves ; why to the point

Of my long-flatter'd wishes did ye lift me,

Then sink me thus so low ? Just as I drew

The glorious stroke that was to make me happy,

Why did you blast my strong extended arm ?

Strike the dry sword unfated to the ground ?

But that to mock us is your cruel sport ?

What else is human life ?

Maf. Thus always join'd

With an inhuman heart, and brutal manners,

Is irreligion to the ruling gods ;
 Whose schemes our peevish ignorance arraigns,
 Our thoughtless pride.—Thy lost condition, Syphax,
 Is nothing to the tumult of thy breast.
 There lies the sting of evil, there the drop
 That poisons nature.—Ye mysterious powers
 Whose ways are ever-gracious, ever-just,
 As ye think wisest, best, dispose of me ;
 But, whether thro' your gloomy depths I wander,
 Or on your mountains walk ; give me the calm
 The steady, smiling soul ; where wisdom sheds,
 Eternal sunshine and eternal joy.
 Then, if misfortune comes, she brings along
 The bravest virtues. And so many great
 Illustrious spirits have convers'd with woe,
 (The pride of adverse fate !) as are enough
 To consecrate distress, and make even death
 Ambition.

Syph. Torture ! Racks ! The common trick
 Of insolent success, unsuffering pride,
 This prate of patience, and I know not what
 'Tis all a lie, impracticable rant ;
 And only tends to make me scorn thee more.
 But why this talk ? In mercy send me hence ;
 Yet—ere I go—Oh, save me from distraction !
 I know, hot youth, thou burnest for my queen ;
 But, by the majesty of ruin'd kings,
 And that commanding glory which surrounds her,
 I charge thee, touch her not !

Maf. No, Syphax, no.
 Thou need'st not charge me. That were mean indeed,
 A triumph that to thee. But could I stoop
 Again to love her ; Thou, what right hast thou,
 A captive to her bed ? Nor life, nor queen,
 Nor ought a captive has. All laws in this,
 Roman and Carthaginian, all agree.

Syph. Here, here, begins the bitterness of death !
 Here my chains grind me first !

Maf. Poor Sophonisba !
 She too becomes the prize of conquering Rome ;
 What most her heart abhors. Alas, how hard
 Will slavery sit on her exalted soul !

How piteous hard ! But, if I know her well,
She never will endure it, she will die.

For not a Roman burns with nobler ardor,
A higher sense of liberty, than she ;
And tho' she marry'd thee, her only stain,
False to my youth, and faithless to my vows ;
Yet I must own it, from a worthy cause,
From public spirit, did her fault proceed.

Syb. Blue plagues, and poison on thy meddling tongue !
Talk not of her ; for every word of her
Is a keen dagger, grinding thro' my heart.
Oh, for a lonely dungeon ! where I rather
Would talk with my own groans, and great revenge,
Than in the mansions of the blest with thee.
Hell ! Whither must I go ?

Maf. Unhappy man !
And is thy breast determin'd against peace,
On comfort shut ?

Syb. On all, but death, from thee.

Maf. Narva, be Syphax thy peculiar care ;
And use him well with tenderness and honour.
This evening Lælius, and to morrow Scipio,
To Cirtha come: Then let the Romans take
Their prisoner.

Syb. There shines a gleam of hope
Across the gloom—From thee deliver'd !—Ease [lighter !
Breathes in that thought—Lead on—My heart grows
Mafiniffa alone. [Exit.

Maf. What dreadful havoc in the human breast
The passions make, when unconfin'd, and mad,
They burst unguided by the mental eye,
The light of reason ; which in various ways
Points them to good, or turns them back from ill.
O save me from the tumult of the soul !
From the wild beasts within !—For circling sands,
When the swift whirlwind whelms them o'er the lands ;
The roaring deeps that to the clouds arise,
While thwarting thick the mingled lightning flies ;
The monster-brood to which this land gives birth,
The blazing city, and the gaping earth ;
All deaths, all tortures, in one pang combin'd,
Are gentle to the tempest of the mind. [Exit.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Enter Masinissa and Narva.

MASINISSA.

'TIS true, my friend, [form'd,
 Thou good old man, by whom my youth was
 The firm companion of my various life,
 I own, 'tis true, that Sophonisba's image
 Lives in my bosom still; and at each glance
 I take in secret of the bright idea,
 A strange disorder seizes on my soul,
 Which burns with stronger glory. Need I say,
 How once she had my vows? 'Till Scipio came,
 Resistless man! like a descending god,
 And snatch'd me from the Carthaginian side
 To nobler Rome; beneath whose laurel'd brow,
 And ample eye, the nations grow polite,
 Humane and happy. Then thou may'st remember,
 Such is this woman's high impetuous spirit,
 That all-controlling love she bears her country,
 Her Carthage; that at this she sacrific'd
 To Syphax, unbelov'd, her blooming years,
 And won him off from Rome.

Nar. My generous prince!
 Applauding Afric of thy choice approves.
 Fame claps her wings, and virtue smiles on thee,
 Of peace thou soft'ner, and thou soul of war!
 But Oh, beware of that fair foe to glory,
 Woman! and most of Carthaginian woman!
 Who has not heard of fatal Punic guile?
 Of their sly conquests? their insidious leagues?
 Their Asdrubals? their Hannibals? with all
 Their wily heroes? And, if such their men,
 What must their women be?

Mas. You make me smile.
 I thank thy honest zeal. But never dread
 The firmness of my heart, my strong attachment,

Severe

Severe to Rome, to Scipio, and to glory.
 Indeed, I cannot, would not quite forget
 The grace of Sophonisba; how she look'd,
 And talk'd, and mov'd, a Pallas, or a Juno!
 Accomplish'd even in trifles, when she stopp'd
 Ambition's flight, and with a soften'd eye
 Gave her quick spirit into gayer life,
 Then every word was liveliness, and wit;
 We heard the Muses' song; and the dance swam
 Thro' all the maze of harmony. I flatter not,
 Believe me, Narva; yet my panting soul,
 To Scipio taken in the fair pursuit
 Of fame, and for my people's happiness,
 Resign'd this Sophonisba; and tho' now
 Constrain'd by soft necessity to see her,
 And she a captive in my power, will still
 Resign her.

Nar. Let me not doubt thy fortitude,
 My Masinissa, thy exalted purpose
 Not to be lost in love; but, ah! we know not,
 Oft, till experience fights it to the soul,
 The boundless witchcraft of ensnaring woman,
 And our own slippery hearts. From Scipio learn
 The temperance of heroes. I'll recount
 Th' instructive story, what these eyes beheld;
 Perhaps you've heard it; but 'tis pleasing still,
 Tho' told a thousand times.

Mas. I burn to hear it.
 Lost by my late misfortunes in the desert,
 I liv'd a stranger to the voice of fame,
 To Scipio's last exploits. Exalt me now.
 Great actions raise the mind. But when a friend,
 A Scipio does them; then with more than wonder,
 Even with a sort of vanity we listen.

Nar. When to his glorious, first essay in war,
 New Carthage fell; there all the flower of Spain
 Were kept in hostage; a full field presenting
 For Scipio's generosity to shine.
 And then it was, that when the hero heard
 How I to thee belong'd, he with large gifts,
 And friendly words dismiss'd me.

Maf. I remember.

And in his favour that impress'd me first.
But to thy story.

Nar. What with admiration
Struck every heart, was this—A noble virgin,
Conspicuous far o'er all the captive dames,
Was mark'd the General's prize. She wept, and blush'd,
Young, fresh, and blooming like the morn. An eye,
As when the blue sky trembles thro' a cloud
Of purest white. A secret charm combin'd
Her features, and infus'd enchantment thro' them.
Her shape was harmony. ——— But eloquence
Beneath her beauty fails; which seem'd, on purpose,
Pour'd out by lavish nature, that mankind
Might see this action in its highest lustre.
Soft, as she pass'd along, with downcast eyes,
Where gentle sorrow swell'd, and now and then
Dropt o'er her modest cheek a trickling tear;
The Roman legions languish'd; and hard war
Felt more than pity. Even Scipio's self,
As on his high tribunal rais'd he sat,
Turn'd from the piercing sight, and chiding ask'd
His officers, if by this gift they meant
To cloud his glory in its very dawn.

Maf. Oh, gods! my fluttering heart! On, stop not, Narva.

Nar. She question'd of her birth, in trembling accents,
With tears and blushes broken, told her tale.
But when he found her royally descended,
Of her old captive parents the sole joy;
And that a hapless Celtiberian prince,
Her lover and belov'd, forgot his chains,
His lost dominions, and for her alone
Wept out his tender soul; sudden the heart
Of this young, conquering, loving, godlike Roman
Felt all the great divinity of virtue:
His wishing youth stood check'd, his tempting power,
By infinite humanity ———

Maf. Well, well;
And then!

Nar. Disdaining guilty doubt, at once
He for her parents and her lover call'd.

The various scene imagine : how his troops
 Look'd dubious on, and wonder'd what he meant ;
 While stretch'd below the trembling suppliants lay,
 Rack'd by a thousand mingling passions, fear,
 Hope, jealousy, disdain, submission, grief,
 Anxiety, and love in every shape.
 To these as different sentiments succeeded,
 As mixt emotions, when the man divine
 Thus the dread silence to the lover broke.
 We both are young, both charm'd. The right of war
 Has put thy beauteous mistress in my power ;
 With whom I could, in the most sacred rites,
 Live out a happy life : but know that Romans
 Their hearts as well as enemies can conquer.
 Then take her to thy soul ; and with her take
 Thy liberty and kingdom. In return
 I ask but this. When you behold these eyes,
 These charms, with transport ; be a friend to Rome.

Maf. There spoke the soul of Scipio—But the lovers—

Nar. Joy and extatic wonder held them mute ;
 While the loud camp, and all the clust'ring crowd,
 That hung around, rang with repeated shouts.
 Fame took th' alarm, and thro' resounding Spain
 Blew fast the fair report : which, more than arms,
 Admiring nations to the Romans gain'd.

Maf. My friend in glory ! thy awaken'd prince
 Springs at thy faithful tale. It fires my soul,
 And nerves each thought anew ; apt oft perhaps,
 Too much, too much to slacken into love.
 But now the soft oppression flies ; and all
 My mounting powers expand to deeds like thine,
 Thou pattern and inspirer of my fame,
 Scipio, thou first of men, and best of friends !
 What man of soul would live, my Narva, breathe
 This idle-puffing element ; and run,
 Day after day, the still-returning round
 Of life's mean offices, and sickly joys ;
 But in compassion to mankind ? to be
 A guardian god below ? to dissipate
 An ardent being in heroic aims ?
 Do something vastly great like what you told ?
 Something to raise him o'er the groveling herd,

And make him shine for ever?—Oh, my friend!
 Bleed every vein about me; every nerve
 With anguish tremble; every sinew ake;
 Be toil familiar to my limbs; ambition
 Mix all my thoughts in an incessant whirl;
 The third time may I lose my kingdom; and again
 Wander the false inhospitable Syrts;
 Yet Oh, ye liberal gods! in rich award,
 And amplest recompence—I ask no more—
 Share me the wreath of fame from Scipio's brow!
 But see, she comes! mark her majestic port.

Enter Sophonisba and Phœnissa.

Soph. Behold, victorious prince! the scene revers'd;
 And Sophonisba kneeling here; a captive,
 O'er whom the gods, thy fortune, and thy virtue,
 Have given unquestion'd power of life and death.
 If such a one may raise her suppliant voice,
 Once music to thy ear; if she may touch
 Thy knee, thy purple, and thy victor-hand;
 Oh, listen, Masinissa! Let thy soul
 Intensely listen! While I fervent pray,
 And strong adjure thee, by that regal state,
 In which with equal pomp we lately shone!
 By the Numidian name, our common boast!
 And by those household gods! who may, I wish,
 With better omens take thee to this palace,
 Than Syphax hence they sent. As is thy pleasure,
 In all beside, determine of my fate.
 This, this alone I beg. Never, Oh, never!
 Into the cruel, proud, and hated power
 Of Romans let me fall. Since angry heaven
 Will have it so, that I must be a slave,
 And that a galling chain must bind these hands;
 It were some little softening in my doom,
 To call a kindred son of the same clime,
 A native of Numidia, my lord.
 But if thou canst not save me from the Romans,
 If this sad favour be beyond thy power;
 At least to give me death is what thou canst.
 Here strike—My naked bosom courts thy sword;
 And my last breath shall bless thee, Masinissa!

Maf. Rise, Sophonisba, rise. To see thee thus
Is a revenge I scorn; and all the man
Within me, though much injur'd by thy pride,
And spirit too tempestuous for thy sex,
Yet blushes to behold thus at my feet,
Thus prostrate low, her, for whom kings have kneel'd,
The fairest, but the falsest of her sex.

Soph. Spare thy reproach——'Tis cruel thus to lose
In rankling discord, and ungenerous strife,
The few remaining moments that divide me
From the last evil, bondage—Roman bondage!
Yes, shut thy heart against me; shut thy heart
Against compassion, every human thought,
Even recollected love: yet know, rash youth!
That when thou seest me swell their lofty triumph,
Thou seest thyself in me. This is my day;
To-morrow may be thine. But here, assur'd,
Here will I lie on this vile earth, forlorn,
Of hope abandon'd, since despis'd by thee;
These locks all loose and fordid in the dust;
This sullied bosom growing to the ground,
Scorch'd up with anguish, and of every shape
Of misery full: till comes the soldier fierce
From recent blood; and, in thy very eye,
Lays raging his rude sanguinary grasp
On these weak limbs; and clinches them in chains.
Then if no friendly steel, no nectar'd draught
Of deadly poison, can enlarge my soul;
It will indignant burst from a slave's body;
And, join'd to mighty Dido, scorn ye all.

Maf. Oh, Sophonisba! 'tis not safe to hear thee;
And I mistook my heart, to trust it thus.
Hence, let me fly.

Soph. You shall not, Masinissa!
Here will I hold you, tremble here for ever;
Here unremitting grow, till you consent.
And can'st thou think, Oh! canst thou think to leave me?
Expos'd, defenceless, wretched, here alone?
A prey to Romans flush'd with blood and conquest?
The subject of their scorn or baser love?
Sure Masinissa cannot; and, tho' chang'd,
Tho' cold as that averted look he wears;

Sure love can ne'er in generous breasts be lost
To that degree, as not from shame and outrage
To save what once they lov'd.

Maf. Enchantment! Madness!

What wouldst thou, Sophonisba? — Oh, my heart!
My treacherous heart!

Soph. What would I, Masinissa?

My mean request sits blushing on my cheek,
To be thy slave, young Prince, is what I beg;
Here Sophonisba kneels to be thy slave;
Yet kneels in vain. But thou'rt a slave thyself,
And canst not from the Romans save one woman;
Her, who was once the triumph of thy soul,
Ere they seduc'd it by their lying glory.
Immortal gods! and am I fallen so low?
Scorn'd by a lover, by a slave to Rome?
Nought can be worth this baseness, life nor empire.
I loath me for it. On this kinder earth,
Then leave me, leave me, to despair and death.

Maf. What means this conflict with almighty nature?
With the whole warring heart? — Rise, quickly rise,
In all the conquering majesty of charms;
O Sophonisba, rise! while here I swear,
By the tremendous powers that rule mankind,
By heaven, and earth, and hell, by love and glory,
The Romans shall not hurt you — Romans cannot;
For Rome is generous as the gods themselves,
And honours, not insults, a generous foe.
Yet since you dread them, take this sacred pledge,
'This hand of surety, by which kings are bound,
By which I hold you mine, and vow to treat you
With all the reverence due to ruin'd state,
With all the softness of remember'd love,
All that can sooth thy fate, and make thee happy.

Soph. I thank thee, Masinissa. Now the same,
The same warm youth, exalted, full of soul,
With whom, in happier days, I wont to pass
The fighting hour; while dawning fair in love,
All song and sweetness, life set joyous out,
Ere the black tempest of ambition rose,
And drove us different ways. Thus dress'd in war,
In nodding plumes, o'ercastr with fullen thought,

With purpos'd vengeance dark, I knew thee not ;
 But now breaks out the beauteous sun anew,
 The gay Numidian shines who warm'd me once,
 Whose love was glory. Vain ideas, hence !
 Long since, my heart, to nobler passions known,
 Has your acquaintance scorn'd.

Maf. Oh, while you talk,
 Enchanting fair-one ! my deluded thought
 Runs back to days of love ; when fancy still
 Found worlds of beauty, ever rising new
 'To the transported eye ; when flattering hope
 Form'd endless prospects of increasing bliss,
 And still the credulous heart believ'd them all,
 Even more than love could promise. But the scene
 Is full of danger for a tainted eye ;
 I must not, dare not, will not look that way.
 Oh, hide it, wisdom, glory, from my view !
 Or in sweet ruin I shall sink again.
 Disaster clouds thy cheek ; thy colour goes :
 Retire, and from the troubles of the day
 Repose thy weary soul, worn out with care,
 And rough unhappy thought.

Soph. May Masinissa

Ne'er want the goodness he has shewn to me. [Exit.]

Maf. The danger's o'er ; I've heard the fyren's song ;
 Yet still to glory hold my steady course.
 I mark'd thy kind concern, thy friendly fears,
 And own them just ; for she has beauty, Narva,
 So full, so perfect, with so great a soul
 Inform'd, so pointed high with spirit,
 As strikes like lightning from the hand of Jove,
 And raises love to glory.

Narva. Ah, my Prince !

'Too true, it is too true ; her fatal charms
 Are powerful, and to Masinissa's heart
 But know the way too well. And art thou sure,
 'That the soft poison, which within thy veins
 Lay unextinguish'd, is not rouz'd anew ?
 Is not this moment working thro' thy soul ?
 Dost thou not love ? Confess.

Maf. What said my friend,

Of poison, love, of loving Sophonisba ?
 Yes, I admire her, wonder at her beauty ;
 And he who does not is as dull as earth,
 The cold, unanimated form of man,
 Ere lighted up with the celestial fire.
 Where'er she goes, still admiration gazes,
 And listens while she talks. Even thou thyself,
 Who saw'st her with the malice of a friend,
 Even thou thyself admir'st her. Dost thou not ?
 Say, speak sincerely.

Narva. She has charms indeed ;
 But has she charms like virtue ? Tho' majestic,
 Does she command us ? Is her force like glory ?

Maf. All glory's in her eye ; Perfection thence
 Looks from his throne ; and on her ample brow
 Sits Majesty Her features glow with life,
 Warm with heroic soul. Her mien ! she walks,
 As when a towering goddess treads this earth.
 But when her language flows, when such a one
 Descends to sooth, to sigh, to weep, to grasp
 The tottering knee, Oh, Narva ! Narva, Oh !
 Expression here is dumb.

Narva. Alas, my Lord !
 Is this the talk of sober admiration ?
 Are these the fallies of a heart at ease ?
 Of Scipio's friend ? And was it the calm sense
 Of fair perfection, that, while she kneel'd
 For what you rashly promis'd, seiz'd your soul,
 Stole out in secret transports from your eye,
 That writh'd you groaning round, and shook your frame ?

Maf. I tell thee once again, too cautious man,
 That when a woman begs, a matchless woman,
 A woman once belov'd, a fallen queen,
 A Sophonisba ! when she twines her charms
 Around our soul, and all her power of looks,
 Of tears, of sighs, of softness, plays upon us,
 He's more or less than man who can resist her.
 For me, my steadfast soul approves, nay, more,
 Exults in the protection it has promis'd :
 And nought, tho' plighted honour did not bind me,
 Shall shake the happy purpose of my heart ;

Nought, by th' avenging gods, who heard my vow,
And hear me now again.

Narva. And was it then
For this you conquer'd?

Maf. Yes, and triumph in it.
This was my fondest wish, the very point,
The plume of glory, the delicious prize
Of bleeding years. And I had been a brute,
A greater monster than Numidia breeds,
A horror to myself, if, on the ground,
Cast vilely from me, I th' illustrious fair one
Had left to bondage, bitterness, and death.
Nor is there ought in war worth what I feel,
In pomp and hollow state, like this sweet sense
Of infelt blifs, which the reflection gives me,
Of saving thus such excellence and beauty
From her supreme abhorrence.

Narva. Masiniffa,
My friend, my royal Lord! alas, you slide,
You sink from virtue! On the giddy brink
Of fate you stand. One step, and all is lost.

Maf. No more, no more! If this is being lost,
If this, mistaken! is forsaking virtue,
And rushing down the precipice of fate,
Then down I go, far, far beyond the din
Of scrupulous, dull precaution. Leave me, Narva;
I want to be alone, to find some shade,
Some solitary gloom, there to shake off
This weight of life, this tumult of mankind,
This sick ambition, on itself recoiling,
And there to listen to the gentle voice,
The sigh of peace, something, I know not what,
That whispers transport to my heart. Farewel. [*Exit.*

Narva. Struck, and he knows it not. So when the
Elate in heart, the warrior scorns to yield, [*field,*
The streaming blood can scarce convince his eyes,
Nor will he feel the wound by which he dies.

[*Exit.*

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

Masiniſſa alone.

IN vain I wander through the ſhade for peace ;
 'Tis with the calm alone, the pure of heart,
 That there the goddeſs talks—But in my breaſt
 Some buſy thought, ſome ſecret-eating pang,
 Throbs inexpressible ; and rowls from—What ?
 From charm to charm, on Sophoniſba ſtill
 Earneſt, intent, devoted all to her.
 Oh, it muſt out !—'Tis love, almighty love !
 Returning on me with a ſtronger tide.
 I'll doubt no more, but give it up to love.
 Come to my breaſt, thou roſy-smiling god !
 Come unconfin'd ! bring all thy joys along,
 All thy ſoft cares, and mix them copious here.
 But why invoke I thee ? Thy power is weak,
 To Sophoniſba's eye ; thy quiver poor,
 To the reſiſtleſs lightning of her form ;
 And dull thy bare inſinuating arts,
 To the ſweet mazes of her flowing tongue.
 Quick, let me fly to her ; and there forget
 This tedious abſence, war, ambition, noiſe,
 Even friendſhip's ſelf, the vanity of fame,
 And all but love, for love is more than all !

Enter Narva.

Welcome again, my friend—Come nearer, Narva ;
 Lend me thine arm, and I will tell thee all,
 Unfold my ſecret heart, whoſe every pulſe
 With Sophoniſba beats.—Nay, hear me out—
 Swift, as I muſ'd, the conflagration ſpread ;
 At once too ſtrong, too general, to be quench'd.
 I love, and I approve it, doat upon her,
 Even think theſe minutes loſt I talk with thee.
 Heavens ! what emotions have poſſeſs'd my ſoul !
 Snatch'd by a moment into years of paſſion.

Nar. Ah, Masiniſſa !—

Maf. Argue not against me.

Talk down the circling winds that lift the desert ;
 And, touch'd by Heaven, when all the forests blaze,
 Talk down the flame, but not my stronger love.
 I have for love a thousand thousand reasons,
 Dear to the heart, and potent o'er the soul.
 My ready thoughts all rising, restless all,
 Are a perpetual spring of tenderness ;
 Oh, Sophonisba ! Sophonisba, Oh !

Nar. Is this deceitful day then come to nought ?
 This day, that set thee on a double throne ?
 That gave thee Syphax chain'd, thy deadly foe ?
 With perfect conquest crown'd thee, perfect glory ?
 Is it so soon eclips'd ? and does yon sun,
 Yon setting sun, who this fair morning saw thee
 Ride through the ranks of long extended war,
 As radiant as himself ; with every glance
 Wheeling the pointed files ; and, when the storm
 Began, beheld thee tread the rising surge
 Of battle high, and drive it on the foe ;
 Does he now, blushing, see thee sunk so weak ?
 Caught in a smile ? the captive of a look ?
 I cannot name it without tears.

Maf. Away !

I'm sick of war, of the destroying trade,
 Smooth'd o'er and gilded with the name of glory.
 Thou need'st not spread the martial field to me ;
 My happier eyes are turn'd another way,
 Behold it not ; or, if they do, behold it
 Shrunk up, far off, a visionary scene ;
 As to the waking man appears the dream.

Nar. Or rather as realities appear,
 The virtue, pomp, and dignities of life,
 In sick disorder'd dreams.

Maf. Think not I scorn
 The task of heroes, when oppression rages,
 And lawless violence confounds the world.
 Who would not bleed with transport for his country,
 Tear ever dear relation from his heart,
 And greatly die to make a people happy,
 Ought not to taste of happiness himself,
 And is low-soul'd indeed—But sure, my friend,

There

There is a time for love, or life were vile!
 A sickly circle of revolving days,
 Led on by hope, with senseless hurry fill'd,
 And clos'd by disappointment. Round and round,
 Still hope for ever wheels the daily cheat;
 Impudent hope! unjoyous madness all!
 Till love comes stealing in, with his kind hours,
 His healing lips, his cordial sweets, his cares.
 Infusing joy, his joys ineffable!
 That make the poor account of life complete,
 And justify the gods.

Nar. Mistaken prince,
 I blame not love. But——

Maf. Slander not my passion.
 I've suffer'd thee too far.—Take heed, old man.
 Love will not bear an accusation, Narva.

Nar. I'll speak the truth, when truth and friendship call,
 Nor fear thy frown unkind.—Thou hast no right
 To Sophonisba; she belongs to Rome.

Maf. Ha! she belongs to Rome.—'Tis true—My
 Where have you wander'd, not to think of this? [thoughts,
 Think e'er I promis'd? e'er I lov'd?—Confusion!
 I know not what to say—I should have lov'd,
 Though Jove in muttering thunder had forbid it.
 But Rome will not refuse so small a boon,
 Whose gifts are kingdoms; Rome must grant it sure,
 One captive to my wish, one poor request,
 So small to them, but, Oh, so dear to me!
 Here let my heart confide.

Nar. Delusive love!
 Through what wild projects is the frantic mind
 Beguil'd by thee!—And think'st thou that the Romans,
 The senators of Rome, these gods on earth,
 Wise, steady to the right, severely just,
 All incorrupt, and like eternal fate
 Not to be mov'd, will listen to the sigh
 Of idle love? They, when their country calls,
 Who know no pain, no tenderness, no joy,
 But bid their children bleed before their eyes;
 That they'll regard the light fantastic pangs
 Of a fond heart? and with thy kingdom give thee
 Their most inveterate foe; from their firm side,

For whom my life should pay, if he met harm ;
So she does use me.

Pbi. Why, this is wondrous well :
But what kind language does she feed thee with ?

Bel. Why, she does tell me, she will trust my youth
With all her loving secrets ; and does call me
Her pretty servant ; bids me weep no more
For leaving you ; she'll see my services
Rewarded ; and such words of that soft strain,
That I am nearer weeping when she ends
Than 'ere she spake.

Pbi. This is much better still.

Bel. Are you not ill, my Lord ?

Pbi. Ill ! No, Bellario.

Bel. Methinks your words
Fall not from off your tongue so evenly,
Nor is there in your looks that quietness,
That I was wont to see.

Pbi. Thou art deceiv'd, boy :
And she stroaks thy head ?

Bel. Yes.

Pbi. And does clap thy cheeks ?

Bel. She does, my Lord.

Pbi. And she does kiss thee, boy ? ha !

Bel. How, my Lord ?

Pbi. She kisses thee ?

Bel. Not so, my Lord.

Pbi. Come, come, I know she does.

Bel. No, by my life.

Pbi. Why, then, she does not love me. Come, she does,
I bade her do it ; I charg'd her by all charms
Of love between us, by the hope of peace
We should enjoy, to yield thee all delights.
Tell me, gentle boy,

Is she not past compare ? Is not her breath
Sweet as Arabian winds, when fruits are ripe ?
Is she not all a lasting mine of joy ?

Bel. Ay, now I see why my disturbed thoughts
Were so perplex'd. When first I went to her,
My heart held augury ; you are abus'd ;
Some villain has abus'd you : I do see
Whereto you tend. Fall rocks upon his head,

That put this to you ! 'tis some subtle train,
To bring that noble frame of yours to nought.

Pbi. Thou think'st I will be angry with thee ; come,
Thou shalt know all my drift : I hate her more
Than I love happiness ; and plac'd thee there,
To pry with narrow eyes into her deeds.
Hast thou discover'd ? Is she fall'n to lust,
As I would wish her ? Speak some comfort to me.

Bel. My Lord, you did mistake the boy you sent :
Had she a sin that way, hid from the world,
Beyond the name of sin, I would not aid
Her base desires ; but what I came to know
As servant to her, I would not reveal,
To make my life last ages.

Pbi. Oh, my heart !
This is a salve worse than the main disease.
Tell me thy thoughts ; for I will know the least
That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart
To know it ; I will see thy thoughts as plain
As I do now thy face.

Bel. Why, so you do.
She is (for ought I know) by all the gods,
As chaste as ice ; but were she foul as hell,
And I did know it thus, the breath of kings,
The points of swords, tortures, nor bulls of brass,
Should draw it from me.

Pbi. Then it is no time
To dally with thee ; I will take thy life,
For I do hate thee ; I cou'd curse thee now.

Bel. If you do hate, you could not curse me worse ;
The gods have not a punishment in store
Greater for me, than is your hate.

Pbi. Fie, fie !
So young and so dissembling ! Tell me when
And where thou didst possess her, or let plagues
Fall on me strait, if I destroy thee not !

Bel. Heav'n knows, I never did : and when I lie
To save my life, may I live long and loath'd !
Hew me asunder, and, whilst I can think,
I'll love those pieces you have cut away
Better than those that grow ; and kiss those limbs,
Because you made them so.

Pbi.

From regal pomp and luxury, to dwell
 Among the forest beasts ; to bear the beam
 Of red Numid'ian suns, and the rank dew
 Of cold unshelter'd nights ; to mix with wolves,
 To hunt with hungry tygers for my prey,
 And thirst with Dipsas on the burning sand ;
 I could have thank'd him for his angry lesson ;
 The fair occasion that his rage afforded
 Of learning patience, fortitude, and hope,
 Still rising stronger on incumbent fate,
 And all that try'd humanity can dictate.
 But there is one curs'd bitterness behind,
 One injury, the man can never pardon ;
 That scorches up the tear in pity's eye,
 And even sweet mercy's self converts to gall.
 I cannot—will not name it—Heart of anguish !
 Down ! down !

Soph. Ah ! whence this sudden storm ? this madness,
 That hurries all thy soul.

Mas. And dost thou ask ?
 Ask thy own faithless heart ; snatch'd from my vows,
 From the warm wishes of my springing youth,
 And given to that old hated monster, Syphax.
 Perfidious Sophonisba !

Soph. Nay, no more.
 With too much truth I can return thy charge.
 Why didst thou drive me to that cruel choice ?
 Why leave me, with my country, to destruction ?
 Why break thy love, thy faith, and join the Romans ?

Mas. By heavens ! the Romans were my better genius,
 Sav'd me from fate, and form'd my youth to glory ;
 But for the Romans I had been a savage,
 A wretch like Syphax, a forgotten thing,
 'The tool of Carthage.

Soph. Meddle not with Carthage,
 Impatient youth, for that I will not bear ;
 Though here I were a thousand fold thy slave.
 Not one base word of Carthage—on thy soul !

Mas. How vain thy phrenzy ! Go, command thy slaves,
 Thy fools, thy Syphaxes ; but I will speak,
 Speak loud of Carthage, call it false, ungenerous,

—Yet shall I check me, since it is thy country?
While the Romans are the light, the glory——

Soph. Romans!

Perdition to the Romans!—and almost
On thee too—Romans are the scourge
Of the red world, destroyers of mankind,
The ruffians, ravagers of earth; and all
Beneath the smooth dissimulating mask
Of justice, and compassion; as if slave
Was but another name for civiliz'd.
All vengeance on the Romans!—While fair Carthage
Unblemish'd rises on the base of commerce;
And asks of heaven nought but the general winds,
And common tides, to carry plenty, joy,
Civility, and grandeur, round the world.

Maf. No more compare them! for the gods themselves
Declare for Rome.

Soph. It was not always so.

The gods declar'd for Hannibal; when Italy
Blaz'd all around him, all her streams ran blood,
All her incarnate vales were vile with death;
And when at Trebia, Thrasymene, and Cannæ,
The Carthaginian sword with Roman blood
Was drunk—Oh, that he then, on that dread day,
While lifeless consternation blacken'd Rome,
Had raz'd th' accursed city to the ground,
And sav'd the world!—When will it come again,
A day so glorious, and so big with vengeance,
On those my soul abhors?

Maf. Avert it, heaven!

The Romans not enslave, but save the world
From Carthaginian rage.

Soph. I'll bear no more!

Nor tenderness, nor life, nor liberty,
Nothing shall make me bear it.—Perish, Rome!
And all her menial friends!—Yes, rather, rather,
Detested as ye are, ye Romans, take me,
Oh, pitying take me to your nobler chains!
And save me from this abject youth, your slave!
——How canst thou kill me thus?

Maf. I meant it not.

I only meant to tell thee, haughty fair one!

How this alone might bind me to the Romans ;
That, in a frail and sliding hour, they snatch'd me
From the perdition of thy love ; which fell,
Like baleful lightning, where I most could wish,
And prov'd destruction to my mortal foe.
Oh, pleasing ! fortunate !

Soph. I thank them too.

By heavens ! for once, I love them ; since they turn'd
My better thoughts from thee, thou — But I will not
Give thee the name, thy mean fervility
From my just scorn deserves.

Maf. Oh, freely call me

By every name thy fury can inspire ;
Enrich me with contempt — I love no more —
It will not hurt me, Sophonisba. --- Love,
Long since I gave it to the passing winds,
And would not be a lover for the world.
A lover is the very fool of nature ;
Made sick by his own wantonness of thought,
His fever'd fancy : while to your own charms
Imputing all, you swell with boundless pride.
Shame on the wretch ! who should be driven from men,
'To live with Asian slaves, in one soft herd,
All wretched, all ridiculous together.
For me, this moment, here I mean to bid
Farewel, a glad farewel to love and thee.

Soph. With all my soul, farewel ! --- Yet, ere you go ;
Know that my spirit burns as high as thine,
As high to glory, and as low to love.
Thy promises are void ; and I absolve thee,
Here in the presence of the list'ning gods.
Take thy repented vows --- To proud Cornelia
I'd rather be a slave, to Scipio's mother,
Than queen of all Numidia, by the favour
Of him, who dares insult the helpless thus. [Pausing.]
Still dost thou stay ? Behold me then again,
Hopeless, and wild, a lost abandon'd slave.
And now thy brutal purpose must be gain'd.
Away, thou cruel, and ungenerous, go !

Maf. No, not for worlds would I resume my vow !
Dishonour blast me then ! all kind of ills
Fill up my cup of bitterness and shame !

When I resign thee to triumphant Rome.
 Oh, lean not thus dejected to the ground!
 The fight is misery——What roots me here?
 Alas! I have urg'd my foolish heart too far;
 And love depress'd recoils with greater force.
 Oh, Sophonisba!

[*Aside.*]

Soph. By thy pride she dies.
 Inhuman prince!

Mas. Thine is the conquest, nature!
 By heaven and earth, I cannot hold it more.
 Wretch that I was! to crush th' unhappy thus;
 The fairest too, the dearest of her sex!
 For whom my soul could die!---Turn, quickly turn,
 Oh, Sophonisba! my belov'd! my glory!
 Turn and forgive the violence of love,
 Of love that knows no bounds!

Soph. And can it be?
 Can that soft passion prove so fierce of heart,
 As on the tears of misery, the sighs
 Of death, to feast? to torture what it loves?

Mas. Yes, it can be, thou goddess of my soul!
 Whose each emotion is but varied love,
 All over love, its powers, its passions, all:
 Its anger, indignation, fury, love;
 Its pride, disdain, even detestation, love;
 And when it, wild, resolves to love no more,
 Then is the triumph of excessive love.
 Didst thou not mark me? Mark the dubious rage,
 That tore my heart with anguish while I talk'd?
 Thou didst; and must forgive so kind a fault.
 What would thy trembling lips?

Soph. That I must die.
 For such another storm, so much contempt
 Thrown out on Carthage, so much praise on Rome,
 Were worse than death. Why should I longer tire
 My weary fate? The most relentless Roman
 What could he more?

Mas. Oh, Sophonisba, hear!
 See me thy suppliant now. Talk not of death.
 I have no life, but thee. Alas, alas!
 Hadst thou a little tenderness for me,
 The smallest part of what I feel, thou wouldst——

What wouldst thou not forgive? But how indeed
 How can I hope it? Yet I from this moment,
 Will so devote my being to thy pleasure,
 So live alone to gain thee; that thou must,
 If there is human nature in thy breast,
 Feel some relenting warmth.

Soph. Well, well, 'tis past.

To be inexorable suits not slaves.

Mas. Spare, spare that word; it stabs me to the soul;
 My crown, my life, and liberty are thine.
 Oh, give my passion way! My heart is full,
 Oppress'd by love; and I could-number tears
 With all the dews that sprinkle o'er the morn;
 While thus with thee conversing, thus with thee
 Even happy to distress.—Enough, enough,
 Have we been cheated by the trick of state,
 For Rome and Carthage suffer'd much too long;
 And, led by gaudy phantoms, wander'd far,
 Far from our blis: but now since met again,
 Since here I hold thee, circle all perfection,
 The prize of life! since fate too presses hard,
 Since Rome and slavery drive thee to the brink;
 Let this immediate night exchange our woes,
 Secure my blis, our future fortunes blend,
 Set thee, the queen of beauty, on my throne,
 And make it doubly mine.—A wretched gift
 To what my love could give!

Soph. What! marry thee?

This night?

Mas. Thou dear one! yes, this very night,
 Let injur'd Hymen have his rights restor'd,
 And bind our broken vows.—Think, serious think
 On what I plead. A thousand reasons urge.
 Captivity dissolves thy former marriage;
 And if 'tis with the meanest vulgar so,
 Can Sophonisba to a slave, to Syphax,
 The most exalt'd of her sex, be bound?
 Besides it is the best, perhaps sole way,
 To save thee from the Romans; and must sure
 Bar their pretensions: or, if ruin comes,
 To perish with thee is to perish happy.

Soph. Yet must I still insist—

Maf. It shall be so.

I know thy purpose; it would plead for Syphax.
He shall have all, thou dearest! shall have all,
Crowns, trifles, kingdoms, all again, but thee,
But thee, thou more than all!

Soph. Bear witness, heaven!

This is alone for Carthage.

[*To him.*] Gain'd by goodness,

I may be thine. Expect no love, no sighing.

Perhaps, hereafter, I may learn again

To hold thee dear. If on these terms thou canst,

Here take me, take me, to thy wishes.

Maf. Yes,

Yes, Sophonisba! as a wretch takes life

From off the bleeding rack.---All wild with joy,

'Thus hold thee, press thee, to my bounding heart;

And bless the bounteous gods. Can Heaven give more?

Oh, happy! happy! happy! Come, my fair,

This ready minute sees thy will perform'd;

From Syphax knocks his chains; and I myself,

Even in his favour, will request the Romans.

Oh, thou hast smil'd my passions into peace!

So, while conflicting winds embroil'd the seas,

In perfect bloom, warm with immortal blood,

Young Venus rear'd her o'er the raging flood;

She smil'd around, like thine her beauties glow'd;

When smooth, in gentle swells, the surges flow'd;

Sunk, by degrees, into a liquid plain;

And one bright calm sat trembling on the main.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Sophonisba and Phoenissa.

PHOENISSA.

HAIL, queen of Masælylia once again!

And fair Massylyia join'd! This rising day

Saw Sophonisba, from the height of life,

Thrown to the very brink of slavery:

State, honours, armies vanquish'd ; nothing left
But her own great unconquerable mind.

And yet, ere evening comes, to larger power
Restor'd, I see my royal friend ; and kneel
In grateful homage to the gods, and her.
Ye powers, what awful changes often mark
The fortunes of the great !

Soph. Phœnissa, true ;

'Tis awful all, the wonderous work of fate.
But, ah ! this sudden marriage damps my soul ;
I like it not, that wild precipitance
Of youth, that ardor, that impetuous stream
In which his love return'd. At first, my friend,
He vainly rag'd with disappointed love ;
And, as the hasty storm subsided, then
To softness varied, to returning fondness,
To sighs, to tears, to supplicating vows ;
But all his vows were idle, till at last
He shook my heart by Rome. To be his queen
Could only save me from their horrid power.
And there is madness in that thought, enough
In that strong thought alone, to make me run
From nature.

Phœn. Was it not auspicious, Madam ?
Just as we hop'd ? just as our wishes plann'd ?
Nor let your spirit sink. Your serious hours,
When you behold the Roman savage check'd,
From their enchantment Mafinissa freed,
And Carthage mistress of the world again,
This marriage will approve : then will it rise
In all its glory, virtuous, wise and great,
While happy nations, then deliver'd, join
Their loud acclaim. And, had the white occasion
Neglected slown, where now had been your hopes ?
Your liberty ? your country ? where your all ?
'Think well of this, think that, think every way,
And Sophonisba cannot but exult
In what is done.

Soph. So may my hopes succeed !
As love alone to Carthage, to the public,
Led me a marriage-victim to the temple,
And justifies my vows. Ha ! Syphax here !

What would his rage with me? Phœnissa, stay.
But this one trial more---Heroic truth,
Support me now!

Enter Syphax.

Syph. You seem to fly me, Madam,
To shun my congratulations. Here I come,
To join the general joy; and I, sure I,
Who have to dotage, have to ruin lov'd you,
Must take a tender part in your success,
In your recover'd state.

Soph. 'Tis very well.
I thank you, Sir.

Syph. And gentle Mafinissa,
Say, will he prove a very coming fool?
All pliant, all devoted to your will?
A glorious wretch, like Syphax? Ha! not mov'd!
Speak, thou perfidious! Canst thou bear it thus?
With such a steady countenance? Canst thou
Here see the man thou hast so grossly wrong'd,
And yet not sink in shame? And yet not shake
In every guilty nerve?

Soph. What have I done,
That I should tremble? that I should not dare
To bear thy presence? Was my heart to blame,
I'd tremble for myself, and not for thee,
Proud man! Nor would I live to be ashamed.
My soul itself would die, could the least shame
On her unspotted fame be justly cast:
For of all evils, to the generous, shame
Is the last deadly pang. But you behold
My late engagement with a jealous, false,
And selfish eye.

Syph. Avenging Juno, hear?
And canst thou think to justify thyself?
I blush to hear thee, traitress!

Soph. Oh, my soul!
Canst thou hear this, this base opprobrious language,
And yet be tamely calm?---Well, well, for once
It shall be so---in pity to thy madness---
Impatient spirit, down!---Yes, Syphax, yes,
Yes, I will greatly justify myself;
Even by the consort of the thundering Jove,

Who binds the holy marriage-vow, be judg'd.
 And every public heart, not meanly lost
 In little low pursuits, to wretched self
 Not all devoted, will absolve me too.
 But in the tempest of the soul, when rage,
 Loud indignation, unattending pride,
 And jealousy confound it, how can then
 The nobler passions, how can they be heard?
 Yet let me tell thee——

Syb. Thou canst tell me nought.
 Away! away! nought but illusion, falsehood——

Soph. My heart will burst, in honour to myself,
 If here I speak not; though thy rage, I know,
 Can never be convinc'd, yet shall it be
 Confounded.---And must I renounce my freedom?
 Forgo the power of doing general good?
 Must yield myself the slave, the barbarous triumph
 Of insolent, curag'd, inveterate Rome?
 And all for nothing but to grace thy fall?
 Nay by myself to perish for thy pleasure?
 For thee, the Romans may be mild to thee;
 But I, a Carthaginian, I, whose blood
 Holds unrelenting enmity to theirs;
 Who have myself much hurt them, and who live
 Alone to work them woe; what, what can I
 Hope from their vengeance, but the very dregs
 Of the worst fate, the bitterness of bondage?
 Yet thou, kind man, wouldst in thy generous love,
 Wouldst have me suffer that; be bound to thee,
 For that dire end alone, beyond the stretch
 Of nature and of law.

Syb. Confusion! Law!
 I know the laws permit thee, the gross laws
 That rule the vulgar. I'm a captive, true;
 And therefore mayst thou plead a shameful right
 To leave me to my chains—But say, thou base one!
 Ungrateful! say, for whom am I a captive?
 For whom these many years with war, and death,
 Defeats, and desolation have I liv'd?
 For whom has battle after battle bled?
 For whom my crown, my kingdom, and my all,
 Been vilely cast away? For whom this day,

This very day, have I been stain'd with slaughter,
 With yon last reeking field?---For one, ye gods,
 Who leaves me for the victor, for the wretch
 I hold in utter endless detestation.

Fire! fury! hell!---Oh, I am richly paid!—

But thus it is to love a woman---Woman!

The source of all disaster, all perdition!

Man in himself is social, would be happy,

Too happy; but the gods, to keep him down,

Curs'd him with woman! fond, enchanting, smooth,

And harmless-seeming woman; while at heart

All poisons, serpents, tigers, furies, all

That is destructive, in one form combin'd,

And gilded o'er with beauty!

Soph. Hapless man!

I pity thee; this madness only stirs

My bosom to compassion, not to rage.

Think as you list of our unhappy sex,

Too much subjected to your tyrant force;

Yet know that all, we were not all, at least,

Form'd for your trifles, for your wanton hours.

Our passions too can sometimes soar above

The household task assign'd us, can expand

Beyond the narrow sphere of families,

And take in states into the panting heart,

As well as yours, ye partial to yourselves!

And this is my support, my joy, my glory,

The conscience that my heart abhors all baseness,

And of all baseness most ingratitude.

This sure affronted honour may declare,

With an unblushing cheek.

Soph. False, false as hell!

False as your sex! when it pretends to virtue.

You talk of honour, conscience, patriotism.

A female patriot!---Vanity!---Absurd!

Even doating dull credulity would laugh

To scorn your talk. Was ever woman yet

Had any better purpose in her eye,

Than how to please her pride or wanton will?

In various shapes, and various manners, all,

All the same plagues, or open, or conceal'd,

The bane of life!

Soph. Must I then, must I, Syphax,
Give thee a bitter proof of what I say?
I would not seem to heighten thy distress,
Not in the least insult thee; thou art fallen,
So fate severe has will'd it, fallen by me.
I therefore have been patient; from another,
Such language, such indignity, had fir'd
My soul to madness. But since driven so far,
I must remind thy blind injurious rage
Of our unhappy marriage.

Syph. Horror!—Oh!
Blot it, eternal night!

Soph. Allow me, Syphax!
Hear me but once! If what I here declare
Shines not with reason and the clearest truth,
May I be base, despis'd, and dumb for ever!
I pray thee think, when unpropitious Hymen
Our hands united, how I stood engag'd.
I need not mention what full well thou know'st.
But pray recall, was I not flatter'd? young?
With blooming life elate, with the warm years
Of vanity? sunk in a passion too,
Which few resign? Yet then I married thee,
Because to Carthage deem'd a stronger friend;
For that alone. On these conditions, say,
Didst thou not take me, court me to thy throne?
Have I deceiv'd thee since? Have I dissembled?
To gain one purpose, e'er pretended what
I never felt? Thou canst not say I have.
And if that principle, which then inspir'd
My marrying thee, was right, it cannot now
Be wrong. Nay, since my native city wants
Assistance more, and sinking calls for aid,
Must be more right——

Syph. This reasoning is insult!

Soph. I'm sorry that thou dost oblige me to it.
Then in a word take my full-open'd soul.
All love, but that of Carthage, I despise.
I formerly to Masinissa thee
Preferr'd not, nor to thee now Masinissa,
But Carthage to you both. And if preferring
Thousands to one, a whole collected people,

All nature's tenderneſs, whate'er is ſacred,
 'The liberty, the welfare of a ſtate,
 'To one man's frantic happineſs, be ſhame:
 Here, Syphax, I invoke it on my head!
 'This ſet aſide; I, careleſs of myſelf,
 And, ſcorniſg prosperous ſtate, had ſtill been thine,
 In all the depth of miſery proudly thine!
 But ſince the public good, the law ſupreme,
 Forbids it; I will leave thee with a kingdom,
 'The ſame I found thee, or not reign myſelf.
 Alas! I ſee thee hurt—Why cam'ſt thou here,
 'Thus to inflame thee more?

Syph. Why, forcereſs? Why?
 'Thou complication of all deadly miſchief!
 'Thou lying, ſoothing, ſpecious, charming fury!
 'I'll tell thee why—To breathe my great revenge;
 'To throw this load of burning madneſs from me;
 'To ſtab thee!——

Soph. Ha!——

Syph. And, ſpringing from thy heart,
 'To quench me with thy blood! [*Phœniſſa interpoſes.*

Soph. Oh, give me way!
 Phœniſſa, tempt not thou his brutal rage.
 Me, me, he dares not murder; if he dares,
 Here let his fury ſtrike; for I dare die.
 What holds thy trembling point?

Phæn. Guards!

Soph. Seize the king.
 But look you treat him well, with all the ſtate
 His dignity demands.

Syph. Goodneſs from thee
 Is the worſt death—The Roman trumpets!—Ha!
 Now I bethink me, Rome will do me juſtice.
 Yes, I ſhall ſee thee walk the ſlave of Rome;
 Forget my wrongs, and glut me with the fight.
 Be that my beſt revenge.

Soph. Inhuman! that,
 If there is death in Africa, ſhall not be.

Enter Lælius.

Læli. Syphax! alas, how fallen! how chang'd! from
 I here beheld thee once in pomp and ſplendor; [what
 At that illuſtrious interview, when Rome

And

And Carthage met beneath this very roof,
 Their two great generals, Afrubal and Scipio,
 To court thy friendship. Of the same repast
 Both gracefully partook, and both reclin'd
 On the same couch; for personal distaste
 And hatred seldom burn between the brave.
 Then the superior virtues of the Roman
 Gain'd all thy heart. Even Afrubal himself,
 With admiration struck and just despair,
 Own'd him as dreadful at the social feast
 As in the battle. 'Tis thou may'st remember;
 And how thy faith was given before the gods,
 And sworn and seal'd to Scipio; yet how false
 Thou since hast prov'd, I need not now recount.
 But let thy sufferings for thy guilt atone,
 The captive for the king. A Roman tongue
 Scorns to pursue the triumphs of the sword
 With mean upbraidings.

Syph. Lælius, 'tis too true.
 Curse on the cause!

Læ. But where is Masinissa?
 The brave young victor, the Numidian Roman!
 Where is he, that my joy, my glad applause,
 From envy pure, may hail his happy state?
 Why that contemptuous smile?

Syph. Too credulous Roman!
 I smile to think how that this Masinissa,
 This Rome-devoted hero, must still more
 Attract thy praises by a late exploit.
 In every thing successful.

Læ. What is this?
 These public shouts? A strange unusual joy
 O'er all the captive city blazes wide.
 What wanton riot reigns to-night in Cirtha,
 Within these conquer'd walls?

Syph. This, Lælius, is
 A night of triumph o'er my conqueror,
 O'er Masinissa.

Læ. Masinissa! How?

Syph. Why he to-night is married to my Queen.

Læ. Impossible!

Syb. Yes, she, the fury! she,
 Who put the nuptial torch into my hand,
 That set my throne, my palace, and my kingdom,
 All in a blaze. She now has seiz'd on him;
 Will turn him soon from Rome. I know her power;
 Her lips distil unconquerable poison.
 Oh, glorious thought!—Will sink this hated youth,
 Will crush him deep, beneath the mighty ruin
 Of falling Carthage.

Lael. Can it be? Amazement!

Syb. Nay, learn it from himself. He comes—Away!
 Ye furies, snatch me from his sight! for hell,
 Its tortures all are gentle to the presence
 Of a triumphant rival.

[*Exit.*

Lael. What is man?

Enter Masinissa.

Mas. Thou more than partner of this glorious day!
 Which has from Carthage torn her chief support,
 And tottering left her, I rejoice to see thee.
 To Cirtha welcome, Lælius. Thy brave legions
 Now taste the sweet repose by valour purchas'd;
 This city pours refreshment on their toils.
 I order'd Narva—

Lael. Thanks to Masinissa.

All that is well. I here observ'd the King,
 But loosely guarded. True, indeed, from him
 There is not much to fear. The dangerous spirit,
 Still not unworthy fear, our matchless prize,
 Is his imperious Queen, is Sophonisba.
 The pride, the rage of Carthage live in her.
 How, where is she?

Mas. She, Lælius? In my care.
 Think not of her; I'll answer for her conduct.

Lael. Yes, if in chains. Till then, believe me, Prince,
 It were as hopeful answering for the winds,
 That their broad pinions would not rouse the desert,
 Or that their darted lightning will be harmless,
 As promise peace from her. But why so dark?
 You shift your place; your countenance grows warm.
 It is not usual this in Masinissa.

Pray, what offence can asking for the Queen,
 The Roman captive, give?

Mas.

Maf. Lælius, no more.

You know my marriage—Sypfax has been busy.
It is unkind to dally with my passion.

Læli. Ah, Mafiniffa! was it then for this,
Thy hurry hither from the recent battle?
Is the first instance of the Roman bounty
Thus, thus abus'd? They give thee back thy kingdom,
And in return are of their captive robb'd;
Of all they valued, Sophonisba.

Maf. Robb'd!

How, Lælius? Robb'd!

Læli. Yes, Mafiniffa, robb'd.
What is it else? But I, this very night,
Will here assert the majesty of Rome,
And, mark me, tear her from the nuptial bed.

Maf. Oh, gods! Oh, patience! As soon, fiery Roman,
As soon thy rage might from her azure sphere
Tear yonder moon. The man that seizes her,
Shall set his foot first on my bleeding heart:
Of that be sure. And is it thus ye treat
Your firm allies? Thus kings in friendship with you?
Of human passions strip them? Slaves indeed,
If thus deny'd the common privileges
Of nature, what the weakest creatures claim,
A right to what they love.

Læli. Out, out! For shame!

This passion makes thee blind. Here is a war,
Which desolates the nations, has almost
Laid waste the world. How many widows, orphans,
And love-lorn virgins pine for it in Rome!
Even her great senate droops, her nobles fail,
Her Circus shrinks, her every lustre thins;
Nature herself, by frequent prodigies,
Seems at this havock of her works to sigh;
And our Ausonian plains are now become
A horror to the sight. At each sad step,
Remembrance weeps. Yet her, the greatest prize
It hitherto has yielded; her, whose charms
Are only turn'd to what its cruel point,
Thou to thy wedded breast hast taken her,
Hast purchas'd thee her beauties by a sea
Of thy protector's blood, and on a throne

Set her, this day recover'd by their arms.
 Canst thou thyself, thou, think of it with patience?
 Nor to a Roman mention king. A Roman
 Would scorn to be a king. The Roman people
 Took liberty from out the very dust,
 And for great ages urg'd it to the skies,
 The dread of kings!

Maf. Be not so haughty, Lælius.
 It scarce becomes the gentle Scipio's friend;
 Suits not thy wonted ease, the tender manners
 I still have mark'd in thee. I honour Rome;
 But honour too myself, my vows, my Queen;
 Nor will, nor can I tamely hear thee threaten
 To seize her like a slave.

Læl. I will be calm
 This thy rash deed, this unexpected shock,
 Such a peculiar injury to me,
 Thy friend and fellow-soldier, has perhaps
 Snatch'd me too far: for hast thou not dishonour'd,
 By this last action, a successful war,
 Our common charge, entrusted us by Scipio?

Maf. Ay, there it is. Has not thy vain ambition
 (Oh, where is friendship!) plann'd her for thy triumph?
 To think on't, death! to think it is dishonour.
 At such a sight, the warrior's eye might wet
 His burning cheek; and all the Roman matrons,
 Who line the laurel'd way, agham'd, and sad,
 Turn from a captive brighter than themselves.
 But Scipio will be milder.

Læl. I disdain
 This thy surmise, and give it up to Scipio.
 Those passions are not comely. Here to-morrow
 Comes the Proconsul. Mean time, Masinissa,
 Ah, harden not thyself in flattering hope!
 Scipio is mild, but steady—Ha! the Queen.
 I think she hates a Roman—and will leave thee. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sophonisba.

Soph. Was not that Roman Lælius, as I enter'd,
 Who parted gloomy hence?

Maf. Madam, the same.

Soph. Unhappy Afric! since these haughty Romans
 Have in this lordly manner trod thy courts.

I read his fresh reproaches in thy face ;
The lesson'd pupil in thy fallen look,
In that forc'd smile which sickens on thy cheek.

Maf. Oh, say not so, thou rapture of my soul !
For while I see thee, meditate thy charms,
I smile as cordial as the sun in May ;
Deep from the heart, in every sense of joy,
I fondly smile.

Soph. Nay, tell me, Masinissa,
How feels their tyaanny, when 'tis brought home ?
When, lawless grown, it touches what is dear ?
Pomp for a while may dazzle thoughtless man,
False glory blind him ; but there is a time,
When ev'n the slave in heart will spurn his chains,
Nor know submission more. What said his pride ?

Maf. His disappointment for a moment only
Burst in vain passion, and——

Soph. You stood abash'd ;
You bore his threats, and tamely silent heard him,
Heard the fierce Roman mark me for his triumph.
Oh, bitter !

Maf. Banish that unkind suspicion.
The thought enflam'd my soul. I vow'd my life,
My last Massylian, to the sword, ere he
Should touch thy freedom with the least dishonour.
But that from Scipio——

Soph. Scipio !

Maf. That from him——

Soph. I tell thee, Masinissa, if from him
I gain my freedom, from myself conceal it.
I shall disdain such freedom.

Maf. Sophonisba !

Thou all my heart holds precious ! doubt no more.
Nor Rome, nor Scipio, nor a world combin'd
Shall tear thee from me, till out-stretch'd I lie,
A nameless wretch.

Soph. If thy protection fails,
Of this at least be sure, be very sure,
To give me timely death.

Maf. Cease thus to talk
Of death, of Romans, of unkind ambition.
My softer thoughts those rugged themes refuse,

Can turn alone to love. All, all but thee,
 All nature is a passing dream to me :
 Fix'd in my view, thou dost for ever shine,
 Thy form forth-beaming from the soul divine.
 A spirit thine which mortals might adore ;
 Despising love, and thence creating more.
 Thou the high passions, I the tender prove ;
 Thy heart was form'd for glory, mine for love.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Enter Masinissa and Narva.

MASINISSA.

HAIL to the joyous day ! With purple clouds
 The whole horizon glows. The breezy Spring
 Stands loosely floating on the mountain-top,
 And deals her sweets around. The sun too seems,
 As conscious of my joy, with brighter eye
 To look abroad the world ; and all things smile
 Like Sophonisba. Love and friendship sure
 Have mark'd this day from out their choicest stores,
 For beauty rais'd by dignity and virtue,
 With all the graces, all the loves embellish'd.
 Oh, Sophonisba's mine ! and Scipio comes !

Nar. My Lord, the trumpets speak his near approach.*Maf.* I want his secret audience. Leave us, Narva.[*Exit Narva.*]*Enter Scipio.*

Scipio ! more welcome than my tongue can speak !
 Oh, greatly, dearly welcome !

Scipio. Masinissa,

My heart beats back thy joy. A happy friend,
 With laurel green, with conquest crown'd, and glory ;
 Rais'd by his prudence, fortitude and valour,
 O'er all his foes ; and on his native throne,
 Amidst his rescu'd shouting subjects set.
 Say, can the gods, in lavish bounty, give
 A fight more pleasing ?

Maf. My great friend and patron;
 It was thy timely, thy restoring arm,
 That brought me from the fearful desert-life,
 To live again in state, and purple splendor.
 And now I wield the sceptre of my fathers,
 See my dear people from the tyrant's scourge,
 From Syphax freed; I hear their glad applauses;
 And, to compleat my happiness, have gain'd
 A friend worth all. Oh, gratitude, esteem,
 And love like mine, with what divine delight
 Ye fill the heart!

Scipio. Heroic youth! thy virtue
 Has earn'd whate'er thy fortune can bestow.
 It was thy patience, Masinissa; patience,
 A champion clad in steel, that in the waste
 Attended still thy step, and sav'd my friend
 For better days. What cannot patience do?
 A great design is seldom snatch'd at once;
 'Tis patience heaves it on. From savage nature
 'Tis patience that has built up human life,
 The nurse of arts; and Rome exalts her head,
 An everlasting monument of patience.

Maf. If I have that, or any virtue, Scipio,
 'Tis copy'd all from thee.

Scipio. No, Masinissa,
 'Tis all unborrow'd; the spontaneous growth
 Of nature in thy breast. Friendship, for once,
 Must, tho' thou blushest, wear a liberal tongue;
 Must tell thee, noble youth, that long experience
 In councils, battles, many a hard event,
 Has found thee still so constant, so sincere,
 So wise, so brave, so generous, so humane,
 So well attemper'd, and so fitly turn'd
 For what is either great or good in life,
 As casts distinguish'd honour on thy country,
 And cannot but endear thee to the Romans.
 For me, I think my labours all repaid,
 My wars in Afric. Masinissa's friendship
 Smiles at my soul. Be that my dearest triumph,
 To have assisted thy forlorn estate,
 And lent a happy hand in raising thee
 To thy paternal throne, usurp'd by Syphax.

The greatest service could be done my country,
 Distracted Afric, and mankind in general,
 Was aiding sure thy cause. To put the power
 The public power, into the good man's hand,
 Is giving plenty, life, and joy to millions.
 But has my friend, since late we parted armies,
 Since he with Lælius acted such a brave,
 Auspicious part against the common foe,
 Has he been blameless quite? Has he consider'd,
 How pleasure often on the youthful heart,
 Beneath the rosy, soft disguise of love,
 (All sweetness, smiles, and seeming innocence)
 Steals unperceiv'd, and lays the victor low?
 I would not, cannot put thee to the pain——
 It pains me deeper—of the least reproach.
 Let thy too faithful memory supply
 The rest. [*Pausing.*] Thy silence, that dejected look,
 That honest colour flushing o'er thy cheek,
 Impart thy better soul.

Maf. Oh, my good Lord!

Oh, Scipio! love has seiz'd me, tyrant love
 Inthralls my soul. I am undone by love.

Scipio. And art thou then to ruin reconcil'd?
 Tam'd to destruction? Wilt thou be undone?
 Resign the towering thought, the vast design,
 With future glories big; the warrior's wreath,
 The glittering files, the trumpet's sprightly clang,
 The praise of senates, an applauding world,
 The patriot's statue, and the hero's triumph,
 All for a sigh, all for a soft embrace,
 For a gay transient fancy, Masinissa?
 For shame, my friend! for honour's sake, for glory,
 Sit not with folded arms, despairing, weak,
 And careless all, till certain ruin comes;
 Like a sick virgin fighting to the gale,
 Unconquerable love!

Maf. How chang'd indeed!

The time has been, when, fir'd from Scipio's tongue,
 My soul had mounted in a flame with his.
 Where is ambition flown? Hopeless attempt!
 Can love like mine be quell'd? Can I forget

What still possesses, charms my thoughts for ever?
 Throw scornful from me what I hold most dear?
 Not feel the force of excellence? To joy
 Be dead, and undelighted with delight?
 Soft; let me think a moment—No, no, no!
 I am unequal to thy virtue, Scipio.

Scipio. Fie, Masinissa, fie! By heavens, I blush
 At thy dejection, this degenerate language!
 What, perish for a woman! ruin all,
 All the fair deeds which an admiring world
 Hopes from thy rising day, only to sooth
 A stubborn fancy, a luxurious will!
 How must it, think you, found in future story,
 Young Masinissa was a virtuous prince,
 And Afric smil'd beneath his early ray;
 But that a Carthaginian captive came,
 By whom untimely in the common fate
 Of love he fell? The wise will scorn the page;
 And all thy praise be some fond maid exclaiming,
 Where are those lovers now?—Oh, rather, rather,
 Had I ne'er seen the vital light of heaven,
 Than like the vulgar live, and like them die!
 Ambition sickens at the very thought.
 To puff and bustle here from day to day,
 Lost in the passions of inglorious life,
 Joys which the careless brutes possess above us;
 And when some years, each duller than another,
 Are thus elaps'd, in nauseous pangs to die,
 And pass away, like those forgotten things,
 That soon become as they had never been.

Mas. And am I dead to this?

Scipio. The gods, young man,
 Who train up heroes in misfortune's school,
 Have shook thee with adversity, with each
 Illustrious evil, that can raise, expand,
 And fortify the mind. Thy rooted worth
 Has stood these wint'ry blasts, grown stronger by them.
 Shall then, in prosperous times, while all is mild,
 All vernal, fair, and glory blows around thee,
 Shall then the dead serene of pleasure come,
 And lay thy faded honours in the dust?

Mas. O gentle Scipio! spare me, spare my weakness.

Scipio. Remember Hannibal—A figural proof,
 A fresh example of destructive pleasure.
 He was the dread of nations, once of Rome,
 When from Bellona's bosom, nurs'd in camps,
 And hard with toil, he down the rugged Alps
 Rush'd in a torrent over Italy;
 Unconquer'd, till the loose delights of Capua
 Sunk his victorious arm, his genius broke,
 Perfum'd, and made a lover of the hero.
 And now he droops in Bruttium, fear'd no more,
 Sinks on our borders, like a scatter'd storm.
 Remember him, and yet resume thy spirit,
 Ere it is quite dissolv'd.

Mas. Shall Scipio stoop
 Thus to regard, to teach me wisdom thus,
 And yet a stupid anguish at my heart
 Repel whate'er he says?—But why, my Lord,
 Why should we kill the best of passions, love?
 It aids the hero, bids ambition rise,
 Turns us to please, inspires immortal deeds,
 Even softens brutes, and makes the good more good.

Scipio. There is a holy tenderness indeed,
 A nameless sympathy, a fountain-love,
 Branch'd infinite from parents to their children,
 From child to child, from kindred on to kindred,
 In various streams, from citizen to citizen,
 From friend to friend, from man to man in general,
 That binds, supports, and sweetens human life.
 But is thy passion such?—List, Masinissa,
 While I the hardest office of a friend
 Discharge, and, with a necessary hand,
 A hand, tho' harsh at present, really tender,
 I paint this passion. And if then thou still
 Art bent to sooth it, I must fighting leave thee
 To what the gods think fit.

Mas. Oh, never, Scipio!
 Oh, never leave me to myself! Speak on;
 I dread, and yet desire thy friendly hand.

Scipio. I hope that Masinissa need not now
 Be told, how much his happiness is mine;
 With what a warm benevolence I'd spring
 To raise, confirm it, to prevent his wishes.

Oh, luxury to think!—But while he rages,
 Burns in a fever, shall I let him quaff
 Delicious poison for a cooling draught,
 In foolish pity to his thirst? Shall I
 Let a swift flame consume him as he sleeps,
 Because his dreams are gay? Shall I indulge
 A frenzy flash'd from an infectious eye?
 A sudden impulse, un approv'd by reason;
 Nay, by thy cool deliberate thought condemn'd,
 Resolv'd against? A passion for a woman,
 Who has abus'd thee basely, left thy youth,
 Thy love, as sweet, as tender as the spring,
 The blooming hero for the haughty tyrant;
 And now who makes thy sheltering arms alone
 Her last retreat, to save her from the vengeance,
 Which even her very perfidy to thee
 Has brought upon her head?—Nor is this all;
 A woman, who will ply her deepest arts,
 (Ah, too prevailing! as appears already)
 Will never rest, till Syphax' fate is thine;
 'Till friendship weeping flies; we join no more
 In glorious deeds, and thou fall off from Rome?
 I too could add, that there is something mean,
 Inhuman in thy passion. Does not Syphax,
 While thou rejoicest, die? The generous heart
 Should scorn a pleasure which gives others pain.
 If this, my friend, all this consider'd deep,
 Alarm thee not, not rouse thy resolution,
 And call the hero from his wanton slumber,
 Then Masinissa's lost.

Mas. Oh, I am pierc'd!

In every thought am pierc'd! 'Tis all too true—
 I wish I could refuse it. Whither, whither,
 Thro' what enchanted wilds have I been wandering?
 They seem'd Elysium, the delightful plains,
 The happy groves of heroes and of lovers.
 But the divinity that breathes in thee
 Has broke the charm, and I am in a desert,
 Far from the land of peace. It was but lately,
 That a pure joyous calm o'erspread my soul,
 And reason tun'd my passions into bliss;
 When love came hurrying in, and with rash hand,

Mix'd

Mix'd them delirious, till they now ferment
 To misery. There is no reasoning down
 This deep, deep anguish, this continual pang :
 A thousand things, whene'er my raptur'd thought
 Runs back a little. But I will not think—
 And yet I must. Oh, gods! that I could lose
 What a fond few hours' memory has grav'd
 On adamant!

Scipio. But one strong effort more,
 And the fair field is thine—A conquest far
 Excelling that o'er Syphax. What remains,
 Since now thy madness to thyself appears,
 But an immediate, manly resolution
 To shake off this effeminate disease,
 These soft ideas, which seduce thy soul,
 Make it all idle, un aspiring, weak,
 A scene of dreams, to puff them to the winds,
 And be my former friend, thyself, again.
 I joy to find thee touch'd by generous motives,
 And that I need not bid thee recollect
 Whose awful property thou hast usurp'd ;
 Need not assure thee, that the Roman people,
 The senators of Rome, will never suffer
 A dangerous woman, their devoted foe,
 A woman, whose irrefragable spirit
 Has in great part sustain'd this bloody war,
 Whose charms corrupted Syphax from their side,
 And fir'd embattled nations into rage ;
 Will never suffer her, when gain'd so dear,
 To ruin thee too, taint thy faithful breast,
 And kindle future war. No, fate itself
 Is not more steady to the right than they.
 And where the public good but seems concern'd,
 No motive their impenetrable hearts,
 Nor fear nor tenderness can touch—Such is
 The spirit that has rais'd imperial Rome.

Maf. Ah, killing truth! But, I have promis'd, Scipio,
 Have sworn to save her from the Roman power.
 My plighted faith is pass'd, my hand is given ;
 And, by the conscious gods, who mark'd my vows,
 The whole united world shall never have her ;
 For I will die a thousand, thousand deaths,

With

With all Massylia in one field expire,
Ere to the lowest wretch, much more to her
I love, to Sophonisba, to my Queen,
I violate my word.

Scipio. My heart approves
Thy resolution, thy determin'd honour,
For ever sacred be thy word, and oath.
Virtue by virtue will alone be clear'd,
And scorns the crooked methods of dishonour.
But, thus divided, how to keep thy faith
At once to Rome and Sophonisba; how
To save her from our chains, and yet thyself
From greater bondage: this thy secret thought
Can best inform thee.

Mas. Agony! Distraction!
These wilful tears—Oh, look not on me, Scipio!
For I'm a child again.

Scipio. Thy tears are no reproach.
Tears oft look graceful on the manly cheek.
The cruel cannot weep. Even friendship's eye
Gives thee the drop it would refuse itself.
I know 'tis hard, wounds every bleeding nerve
About thy heart, thus to tear off thy passion.
But for that very reason, Masinissa,
'Tis hop'd from thee. The harder, thence results
The greater glory. Why should we pretend
To conquer, rule mankind, be first in power,
In great assemblies, honour, place, and pleasure,
While slaves at heart, while by fantastic turns
Our frantic passions rage? The very thought
Should turn our pomp to shame, our sweet to bitter,
And, when the shouts of millions meet our ears,
Whisper reproach. Oh, ye celestial powers!
What is it, in a torrent of success,
To bear down nations, and o'erflow the world?
All your peculiar favour. Real glory
Springs from the silent conquest of ourselves;
And without that, the conqueror is nought,
Save the first slave. Then rouse thee, Masinissa;
Nor in one weakness all thy virtues lose.
And, Oh, beware of long, of vain repentance!

Mas. Well, well, no more—It is but dying too. [*Exit.*
Scipio.

Scipio. I wish I have not urg'd the truth to rigour.
There is a time when virtue grows severe,
Too much for nature, and even almost cruel.

Enter Lælius.

Poor Masinissa, Lælius, is undone ;
Betwixt his passion and his reason tost
In miserable conflict.

Læl. Entering, Scipio,
He shot athwart me, nor vouchsaf'd one look.
Hung on his clouded brow I mark'd despair,
And his eye glaring with some dire resolve.
Fast o'er his cheek too ran the hasty tear.
It were great pity that he should be lost !

Scipio. By heavens, to lose him were a shock, as if
I lost thee, Lælius, lost my dearest brother,
Bound up in friendship from our infant years.
A thousand lovely qualities endear him,
Only too warm of heart.

Læl. What shall be done ?

Scipio. Here let it rest, till time abates his passion.
Nature is nature, Lælius, let the wise
Say what they please. But, now, perhaps he dies—
Haste, haste, and give him hope. I have not time
To tell thee what—Thy prudence will direct.
Whatever is consistent with my honour,
My duty to the public, and my friendship
To him himself, say, promise, shall be done.
I hope returning reason will prevent
Our farther care.

Læl. I fly with joy.

Scipio. His life
Not only save, but Sophonisba's too ;
For both, I fear, are in this passion mix'd:

Læl. It shall be done.

[*Exit.*

Scipio. If friendship pierces thus,
When Love pours in his added violence,
What are the pangs which Masinissa feels !

[*Exit.*

Enter Sophonisba and Phœnissa.

Soph. Yes, Masinissa loves me—Heavens, how fond !
But yet I know not what hangs on my spirit,
A dismal boding ; for this fatal Scipio,
I dread his virtues, this prevailing Roman,

Even

Even now, perhaps, deludes the generous King,
 Fires his ambition with mistaken glory,
 Demands me from him; for full well he knows,
 That, while I live, I must intend their ruin.

Phœn. Madam, these fears——

Soph. And yet it cannot be.

Can Scipio, whom ev'n hostile fame proclaims
 Of perfect honour, and of polish'd manners,
 Smooth, artful, winning, moderate, and wise,
 Make such a wild demand? Or, if he could,
 Can Masinissa grant it? Give his Queen,
 Whom love and honour bind him to protect,
 Yield her a captive to triumphant Rome?
 'Tis baseness to suspect it; 'tis inhuman.
 What then remains?—Suppose they should resolve,
 By right of war, to seize me for their prize.
 Ay, there it kills! What can his single arm,
 Against the Roman power; that very power
 By which he stands restor'd? Distracting thought!
 Still o'er my head the rod of bondage hangs.
 Shame on my weakness! This poor catching hope,
 This transient taste of joy, will only more
 Imbitter death.

Phœn. A moment will decide.

Madam, till then——

Soph. Would I had dy'd before!

And am I dreaming here? Here, from the Romans,
 Beseeking I may live to swell their triumph?
 When my free spirit should ere now have join'd
 That great assembly, those devoted shades,
 Who scorn'd to live till liberty was lost,
 But ere their country fell, abhorr'd the light.
 Whence this pale slave? He trembles with his message.

Enter a Slave with a letter and poison from Masinissa.

Slave. [*Kneccling.*] This, Madam, from the King, and
 this.

Soph. Ha! Stay——

[*Reads the letter.*

Rejoice, Phœnissa! give me joy, my friend!
 For here is liberty. My fears are air.
 The hand of Rome can never touch me more.
 Hail, perfect freedom, hail!

Phœn.

Phœn. How, what, my Queen!

Ah! what is this? [*Pointing to the poison.*]

Soph. The first of blessings, death.

Phœn. Alas, alas! can I rejoice in that?

Soph. Shift not thy colour at the sound of death;

For death appears not in a dreary light,
Seem not a blank to me; a losing all
Those fond sensations, those enchanting dreams,
Which cheat a toiling world from day to day,
And form the whole of happiness they know.
It is to me perfection, glory, triumph.
Nay, fondly would I chuse it, tho' persuaded
It were a long dark night without a morning,
To bondage far prefer it; since it is
Deliverance from a world where Romans rule,
Where violence prevails—And timely too—
Before my country falls; before I feel
As many stripes, as many chains, and deaths,
As there are lives in Carthage. Glorious charter!
By which I hold immortal life and freedom;
Come, let me read thee once again—and then,
To thy great purpose. [*Reads the letter aloud.*]

“Masinissa to his Queen.

“The gods know with what pleasure I would have kept my faith to Sophonisba in another manner. But since this fatal bowl can alone deliver thee from the Romans, call to mind thy father, thy country; that thou hast been the wife of two kings; and act up to the dictates of thy own heart. I will not long survive thee.”

Oh, 'tis wond'rous well!

Ye gods of death, who rule the Stygian gloom!

Ye who have greatly dy'd! I come, I come!

I die contented, since I die a queen;

By Rome untouch'd, un sullied by their power;

So much their terror, that I must not live.

And thou, go tell the King, if this is all

The nuptial present he can send his bride,

I thank him for it. But that death had worn

An easier face before I trusted him.

His poison, tell him too, he might have spar'd;

These times may want it for himself, and I

Live not of such a cordial unprovided.
 Add, hither had he come, I could have taught
 Him how to die. I linger not, remember,
 I stand not shivering on the brink of life ;
 And, but these votive drops, which, grateful, thus,

[*Taking the poison.*

To Jove the high deliverer I shed,
 Assure him that I drank it, drank it all,
 With an unalter'd smile——Away.

[*Drinks.*

[*Exit Slave.*

[*To Phœn.*

My friend,

In tears, my friend ! Dishonour not my death
 With womanish complaints. Weep not for me,
 Weep for thyself Phœnissa, for thy country,
 But not for me. There is a certain hour,
 Which one would wish all undisturb'd and bright,
 No care, no sorrow, no dejected passions,
 And that is when we die, when hence we go,
 Ne'er to be seen again. Then let us spread
 A bold exalted wing, and the last voice
 We hear, be that of wonder and applause.

Phœn. Who with the patriot wishes not to die !

Soph. And is the sacred moment then so near ?

The moment, when yon sun, those heavens, this earth,
 Hateful to me, polluted by the Romans,
 And all the busy, slavish race of men,
 Shall sink at once, and straight another state,
 New scenes, new joys, new faculties, new wonders,
 Rise on a sudden round ; but this the gods
 In clouds and horror wrap, or none would live.
 How liberal is death ! Methinks, I seem
 To touch the happy shore. Behind me frowns
 A stormy sea, with tossing mortals thick ;
 While, unconfin'd and green, before me lies
 The land of bliss, and everlasting freedom ;
 Where walk the mighty dead, all of one mind,
 One blooming smile, one language, and one country.
 Oh, to be there ! My breast begins to burn ;
 My tainted heart grows sick. Ah, me, Phœnissa !
 How many virgins, infants, tender wretches,
 Must feel these pangs, ere Carthage is no more !
 Soft—lead me to my couch—My shivering limbs

Do this last office, and then rest for ever.

I pray thee, weep not; pierce me not with groans.
The King too here! Nay, then my death is full.

Enter Masinissa, Lælius, and Narva.

Mas. Has Sophonisba drank this cursed bowl?

Oh, horror, horror! what a sight is here?

Soph. Had I not drank it, Masinissa, then
I had deserv'd it.

Mas. Exquisite distress!

Oh, bitter, bitter fate! and this last hope
Compleats my woe.

Soph. When will these ears be deaf
To misery's complaint? These eyes be blind
To mischief wrought by Rome?

Mas. Too soon, too soon!

Ah, why so hasty? But a little while,
Hadst thou delay'd this horrid draught, I then
Had been as happy as I now am wretched. [ing ?

Soph. What means this talk of hope, of coward wait-

Mas. What have I done? Oh, heavens! I cannot think
Without distraction, hell, and burning anguish,
On my rash deed! But, while I talk, she dies.
And how, what, where am I, then? Say, canst thou
Forgive me, Sophonisba?

Soph. Yes, and more,

More than forgive thee, thank thee, Masinissa.
Hadst thou been weak, and dally'd with my freedom,
'Till by proud Rome enslav'd, that injury
I never had forgiven.

Mas. I came with life.

Lælius and I from Scipio hasted hither;
But death was here before us. This vile poison!

Soph. With life! There was some merit in the poison;
But this destroys it all. And couldst thou think
Me mean enough to take it? Oh, Phœnissa!
This mortal toil is almost at an end —
Receive my parting soul.

Phœn. Alas, my Queen!

Mas. Dies, dies, and scorns me! Mercy, Sophonisba!
Grant one forgiving look, while yet thou canst;
Or death itself, the grave cannot relieve me:
But, with the Furies join'd, my frantic ghost

Will howl for ever. Quivering and pale!
Have I done this?

Soph. Come nearer, Masinissa.

Out, stubborn nature!

Maf. Misery! These pangs
To me transferr'd were ease. A moment only,
An agonizing moment, while I have
An age of things to say!

Soph. We, but for Rome,
Might have been happy. Rouze thee now, my soul!
'The cold deliverer' comes. Be mild to Syphax.
In my surviving friend behold me still.
Farewel—'Tis done—Oh, never, never, Carthage,
Shall I behold thee more!

[Dies.

Maf. Dead, dead, Oh, dead!
Is there no death for me?

[Snatches Lælius's sword to stab himself.

Læl. Hold, Masinissa!

Maf. And wouldst thou make a coward of me, Lælius?
Have me survive that murder'd excellence?
Did she not stir? Ha! Who has shock'd my brain?
It whirls, it blazes!—Was it thou, old man?

Narva. Alas, alas!—good Masinissa, softly.
Let me conduct thee to thy couch.

Maf. The grave
Were welcome. But ye cannot make me live:
Oppress'd with life!—Off!—crowd not thus around me;
For I will hear, see, think no more. Thou sun,
Keep up thy hated beams; and all I want
Of thee, kind earth, is an immediate grave.
Ay, there she lies—Why to that pallid sweetness
Can not I, nature, lay my lips, and die?

[Throws herself beside her.

Læl. See there the ruins of the noble mind,
When from calm reason passion tears the sway.
What pity she should perish!—Cruel war!
'Tis not the least misfortune in thy train,
That oft by thee the brave destroy the brave.
She had a Roman soul; for every one
Who loves, like her, his country, is a Roman.
Whether on Afric's sandy plains he glows,
Or lives untam'd among Riphocæan snows.

If parent liberty the breast inflame,
The gloomy Lybian then deserves that name ;
And, warm with freedom, under frozen skies,
In farthest Britain Romans yet may rise.

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

By a FRIEND.

NOW, I'm afraid the modest taste in vogue
 Demands a strong, high-season'd epilogue;
 Else might some silly soul take pity's part,
 And odious virtue sink into the heart.

Our squeamish author scruples this proceeding;
 He says it hurts sound morals and good breeding:
 Nor Sophonisba would he here produce,
 A glaring model of no private use.

Ladies, he bid me say, behold your Cato:
 What tho' no stoic she, nor read in Plato?
 Yet sure she offer'd, for her country's sake,
 A sacrifice, which Cato could not make——
 Already, now, these wicked men are sneering,
 Some wresting what one says, and others leering.
 I vow, they have not strength for—public spirit:
 That, ladies, must be your superior merit.

Mercy forbid! we should lay down our lives,
 Like these old, Punic, barbarous, heathen wives.
 Spare christian blood—— But sure the devil's in her,
 Who for her country would not lose a pinner.

Lard! how could such a creature shew her face?
 How?—Just as you do there—thro' Brussels lace.
 The Roman fair, the public in distress,
 Gave up the dearest ornaments of dress.

How much more cheaply might you gain applause!
 One yard of ribbon, and two ells of gauze.

And gauze each deep-read critic must adore;
 Your Roman ladies dress'd in gauze all o'er.
 Should you, fair patriots, come to dress so thin,
 How clear might all your—sentiments be seen!
 To foreign looms no longer owe your charms;
 Nor make their trade more fatal than their arms.

*Each British dame, who courts her country's praise,
By quitting these outlandish modes, might raise
(Not from yon powder'd band, so thin and spruce)
Ten able-bodied men, for—public use.*

*But now a serious word about the play.
Auspicious smile on this his first essay:
Ye generous Britons! your own sons inspire;
Let your applauses fan their native fire:
Then other Shakespeares yet may rouse the stage,
And other Otways melt another age.*

A

NUPTIAL SONG,

Intended to have been inserted in the FOURTH ACT.

COME, gentle Venus, and assuage
A warring world, a bleeding age:
For nature lives beneath thy ray,
The wint'ry tempests haste away,
A lucid calm invests the sea,
Thy native deep is full of thee;
And flowering earth, where'er you fly,
Is all o'er spring, all sun the sky.
A genial spirit warms the breeze;
Unseen, among the blooming trees,
The feather'd lovers tune their throat,
The desert growls a soften'd note,
Glad o'er the meads the cattle bound,
And love and harmony go round.

But chief, into the human heart
You strike the dear, delicious dart;
You teach us pleasing pangs to know,
To languish in luxurious woe,

To feel the generous passions rise,
 Grow good by gazing, mild by sighs ;
 Each happy moment to improve,
 And fill the perfect year with love.

Come, thou delight of heav'n and earth,
 To whom all creatures owe their birth ;
 Oh, come, red-smiling ! tender, come ;
 And yet prevent our final doom :
 For long the furious God of War
 Has crush'd us with his iron car,
 Has rag'd along our ruin'd plains,
 Has curs'd them with his cruel stains,
 Has clos'd our youth in endless sleep
 And made the widow'd virgin weep.
 Now let him feel thy wonted charms ;
 Oh, take him to thy twining arms !
 And while thy bosom heaves on his,
 While deep he prints the humid kiss,
 Ah, then, his stormy heart controul,
 And sigh thyself into his soul !

Thy son too, Cupid, we implore,
 To leave the green Idalian shore ;
 But he, sweet god, our only foe,
 Long let him draw the twanging bow,
 Transfix us with his golden darts,
 Pour all his quiver on our hearts,
 With gentler anguish make us sigh,
 And teach us sweeter deaths to die.







Robert del.

Engraved for Bell's British Theatre Jan^y 1779.

Thornthwaite sc.

Mrs. HOPKINS in the Character of ARETHUSA.

Yes— I must have thy Kingdoms— must have thee!

BELL'S EDITION.



PHILASTER.

A TRAGEDY.

As altered from BEAUMONT and FLETCHER,

AND PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE

VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. WILD, Prompter.



LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,

MDCCLXXVIII.

On comparing this play with the original, the reasons assigned by the editor in his advertisement, for the alterations he had presumed to make, were so obvious, it was judged to be more acceptable to the reader in its present form, than as originally written.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present age, though it has done honour to its own discernment by the applauses paid to Shakespeare, has, at the same time, too grossly neglected the other great masters in the same school of writing. The pieces of Beaumont and Fletcher in particular, (to say nothing of Jonson, Massinger, Shirley, &c.) abound with beauties, so much of the same colour with those of Shakespeare, that it is almost unaccountable, that the very age which admires one, even to idolatry, should pay so little attention to the others; and, while almost every poet or critic, at all eminent in the literary world, have been ambitious of distinguishing themselves, as editors of Shakespeare, no more than two solitary editions of Beaumont and Fletcher, and one of those of a very late date, have been published in the present century.

The truth is, that nature indeed is in all ages the same; but modes and customs, manners and languages, are subject to perpetual variation. Time insensibly renders writings obsolete and uncouth, and the gradual introduction of new words and idioms brings the older forms into disrepute and disuse. But the intrinsic merit of any work, though it may be obscured, must for ever remain; as antique coins, or old plate, though not current or fashionable, still have their value, according to their weight.

The injuries of modern innovation in the state of letters may be in a great measure repaired, by rendering the writings of our old authors familiar to the public, and bringing them often before them. How many plays are there of Shakespeare, now in constant acting, of which the directors of the theatres would scarce hazard the representation, if the long-continued, and, as it were, traditional approbation of the public had not given a sanction to their irregularities, and familiarized the

diction! The language even of our Liturgy and Bible, if we may venture to mention them on this occasion, would perhaps soon become obsolete and unintelligible to the generality, if they were not constantly read in our churches. The stile of our authors, especially in this play, is often remarkably plain and simple, and only raised or enriched by the sentiments. It is the opinion of Dryden, that even "Shakespeare's language is a little obsolete in comparison of theirs; and that the English language in them arrived to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in, being rather superfluous, than necessary."

Philaster has always been esteemed one of the best productions of Beaumont and Fletcher; and, we are told by Dryden, was the first play that brought them into great reputation. The beauties of it are indeed so striking and so various, that our authors might in this play almost be said to rival Shakespeare, were it not for the many evident marks of imitation of his manner. The late editors of Beaumont and Fletcher conceive, that the poets meant to delineate, in the character of Philaster, a Hamlet racked with the jealousy of Othello; and there are several passages, in this play, where the authors have manifestly taken fire from similar circumstances and expressions in Shakespeare, particularly some, that will readily occur to the reader, as he goes along, from Othello, Hamlet, Cymbeline, and Lear.

To remove the objections to the performance of this excellent play on the modern stage, has been the chief labour, and sole ambition, of the present editor. It may be remembered, that *The Spanish Curate*, *The Little French Lawyer*, and *Scornful Lady*, of our authors, as well as *The Silent Woman* of Jonson, all favourite entertainments of our predecessors, have, within these few years, encountered the severity of the pit, and received sentence of condemnation. That the uncommon merit of such a play as *Philaster* might be universally acknowledged and received, it appeared necessary to clear it of ribaldry and obscenity, and to amend a gross indecency in the original constitution of the fable, which must have checked the success due to the rest of the piece,

piece, nay, indeed, was an insuperable obstacle to its representation.

But though the inaccuracies and licentiousness of the piece were inducements (according to the *incudi reddere* of Horace) to put it on the anvil again, yet nothing has been added more than was absolutely necessary, to make it move easily on the new hinge, whereon it now turns: nor has any thing been omitted, except what was supposed to have been likely to obscure its merit, or injure its success. The pen was drawn, without the least hesitation, over every scene now expunged, except the first scene of the third act, as it stands in the original; in regard to which, the part that Philaster sustains in it occasioned some pause: but, on examination, it seemed that Dion's falsification of facts in that scene was inconsistent with the rest of his character, though very natural in such a person as Megra: and though we have in our times seen the sudden and instantaneous transitions from one passion to another remarkably well represented on the stage, yet Philaster's emotions appeared impossible to be exhibited with any conformity to truth or nature. It was therefore thought advisable to omit the whole scene; and it is hoped, that this omission will not be disapproved, and that it will not appear to have left any void or chasm in the action; since the imputed falsehood of Arethusa, after being so industriously made public to the whole court, might very naturally be imagined to come to the knowledge of Philaster in a much shorter interval; than is often supposed to elapse between the acts; or even between the scenes of some of our old plays.

The scenes in the fourth act, wherein Philaster, according to the original play, wounds Arethusa and Bel-lario, and from which the piece took its second title of Love lies a bleeding, have always been censured by the critics. They breathe too much of that spirit of blood, and cruelty, and horror, of which the English tragedy hath often been accused. The hero's wounding his mistress hurt the delicacy of most; and his maiming Bel-lario sleeping, in order to save himself from his pursuers, offended the generosity of all. This part of the fable, therefore, so injurious to the character of Philaster, it

was judged absolutely requisite to alter; and a new turn has been given to all those circumstances: but the change has been effected by such simple means, and with so much reverence to the original, that there are hardly ten lines added on account of the alteration.

The rest of the additions or alterations may be seen at once, by comparing the present play with the original; if the reader does not, on such occasions, of himself too easily discover the patch-work of a modern hand.

There is extant in the works of the Duke of Buckingham, who wrote *The Rehearsal*, and altered *The Chances*, an alteration of this play, under the title of *The Restoration, or Right will take Place*. The duke seems to have been very studious to disguise the piece, the names of the *Dramatis Personæ*, as well as the title, being entirely changed; and the whole piece, together with the prologue and epilogue, seeming intended to carry the air of an oblique political satire on his own times. However that may be, the Duke's play is as little (if not less) calculated for the present stage, as the original of our authors. The character of *Thrasomond* (for so the Duke calls the Spanish prince) is much more ludicrous than the *Pharamond* of *Beaumont and Fletcher*. Few of the indecencies or obscenities in the original are removed; and with what delicacy the adventure of *Megra* is managed, may be determined from the following specimen of his Grace's alteration of that circumstance, not a word of the following extract being to be found in *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

Enter the Guard, bringing in Thrasomond, in Drawers, muffled up in a Cloak.

Guard. Sir, in obedience to your commands,
We stopt this fellow stealing out of doors.

[They pull off his cloak.]

Agremont. Who's this, the prince?

Cleon. Yes; he is incognito.

King. Sir, I must chide you for this looseness!
You've wrong'd a worthy lady; but no more.

Thra-

Thrasomond. Sir, I came hither but to take the air.

Cleon. A witty rogue, I warrant him.

Agremont. Ay, he's a devil at his answers.

King. Conduct him to his lodgings.

If to move the passions of pity and terror are the two chief ends of tragedy, there needs no apology for giving that title to the play of *Philaster*. If *Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, &c. &c. notwithstanding the casual introduction of comic circumstances in the natural course of the action, are tragedies; *Philaster* is so too. The Duke of Buckingham entitles his alteration a *tragi-comedy*; but that word, according to its present acceptation, conveys the idea of a very different species of composition; a play, like *The Spanish Friar*, or *Oroonoko*, in which two distinct actions, one serious and the other comic, are unnaturally woven together; as absurd a medley (in the opinion of *Addison*) as if an epic writer was to undertake to throw into one poem the adventures of *Æneas* and *Hudibras*.

As to the form in which the piece is now submitted to the public, some, perhaps, will think that the editor has taken too many liberties with the original, and many may censure him for not having made a more thorough alteration. There are, it must be confessed, many things still left in the play, which may be thought to lower the dignity of tragedy, and which would not be admitted in a fable of modern construction: but where such things were in nature, and inoffensive, and served at the same time as so many links in the chain of circumstances that compose the action, it was thought better to subdue in some measure the intemperance of the scenes of low humour, than wholly to reject or omit them. It would not have been in the power, nor indeed was it ever in the intention or desire, of the editor, to give *Philaster* the air of a modern performance; no more than an architect of this age would endeavour to embellish the magnificence of a Gothick building with the ornaments of the Greek or Roman orders. It is impossible for the severest reader to have a meaner opinion of the editor's share in the work than he entertains of it himself. Something, however,
was

was necessary to be done; and the reasons for what he has done have already been assigned; nor can he repent of the trouble he has taken, at the instance of a friend, whom he is happy to oblige, when he sees himself the instrument of restoring Philaster to the theatre, of displaying new graces in Mrs. Yates, and of calling forth the extraordinary powers of so promising a genius for the stage as Mr. Powell.



P R O L O G U E.

Written by GEORGE COLMAN, Esq. on Mr. POWELL'S
first Appearance at Drury-Lane.

*WHILE modern tragedy, by rule exact,
Spins out a thin-wrought fable, act by act,
We dare to bring you one of those bold plays,
Wrote by rough English wits in former days;
Beaumont and Fletcher! those twin stars, that run
Their glorious course round Shakspeare's golden sun;
Or when Philaster Hamlet's place supplied,
Or Bessus wak'd the stage by Falstaff's side.
Their souls, well pair'd, shot fire in mingled rays,
Their hands together twin'd the social bays,
Till fashion drove, in a refining age,
Virtue from court, and nature from the stage.
Then nonsense, in heroics, seem'd sublime;
Kings rav'd in couplets, and maids sigh'd in rhyme.
Next, prim, and trim, and delicate, and chaste,
A bash from Greece and France, came modern taste.
Cold are her sens, and so afraid of dealing
In rant and fustian, they ne'er rise to feeling.
O say, ye bards of phlegm, say, where's the name
That can with Fletcher urge a rival claim?
Say, where's the poet, train'd in pedant schools,
Equal to Shakspeare, who o'erleapt all rules?
Thus of our bards we boldly speak our mind;
A harder task, alas, remains behind:
To-night, as yet by public eyes unseen,
A raw, unpractis'd novice fills the scene.
Bred in the city, his theatric star
Brings him at length on this side Temple-Bar;
Smit with the muse, the ledger he forgot,
And when he wrote his name, he made a blot.
Him while perplexing hopes and fears embarrass,
Skulking (like Hamlet's rat) behind the arras,
Me a dramatic fellow-feeling draws,
Without a fee, to plead a brother's cause.
Genius is rare; and while our great comptroller,
No more a manager, turnt arrant stroller,
Let new adventurers your care engage,
And nurse the infant supplings of the stage!*

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

	<i>Drury-Lane</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
<i>King,</i>	Mr. Bransby.	Mr. L'Estrange.
<i>Philaster,</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Melmoth.
<i>Pharamond,</i>	Mr. Lee.	Mr. Clinch.
<i>Dion,</i>	Mr. Burton.	Mr. Hull.
<i>Cleremont,</i>	Mr. Castle.	Mr. Davis.
<i>Thrafiline,</i>	Mr. Ackman.	Mr. Thompson.
<i>Captain,</i>	Mr. Baddely.	Mr. Dunstall.
<i>Countryman,</i>	Mr. Parsons.	Mr. Cushing.
<i>Messengers,</i>	{ Mr. Fox.	
	{ Mr. Marr.	
<i>Woodmen,</i>	{ Mr. Watkins.	Mr. Fox.
	{ Mr. Strange.	

W O M E N.

<i>Arethusa,</i>	Miss Bride.	Mrs. Mattocke.
<i>Euphrasia,</i> disguised under the name of		
<i>Bellarion,</i> ———	Mrs. Yates.	Mrs. Melmoth.
<i>Megra,</i> a <i>Spanish</i>		
<i>Lady,</i> ———	Mrs. Lee.	Miss Sherman.
<i>Galatea,</i> ———	Miss Mills.	Mrs. Whitfield.
<i>Lady,</i> ———	Mrs. Hippisley.	Miss Pearce.

S C E N E, SICILY.

P H I L A S T E R.

* * The lines marked with inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.

A C T I.

SCENE, *an Antichamber in the Palace.*

Enter Dion, Cleremont, and Thrafiline.

CLEREMONT.

HERE's nor lords, nor ladies.

Dion. Credit me, gentlemen, I wonder at it. They received strict charge from the King to attend here. Besides, it was loudly published, that no officer should forbid any gentleman that desired to attend and hear.

Cler. Can you guess the cause?

Dion. Sir, it is plain, about the Spanish Prince, that's come to marry our kingdom's heir, and be our sovereign.

Cler. Many, that will seem to know much, say, she looks not on him like a maid in love.

Thra. They say too, moreover, that the Lady Megra (sent hither by the Queen of Spain, Pharamond's mother, to grace the train of Arethusa, and attend her to her new home, when espoused to the Prince) carries herself somewhat too familiarly towards Pharamond; and it is whispered, that there is too close an intercourse between him and that lady.

Dion. Troth, perhaps there may; tho' the multitude (that seldom know any thing but their own opinions) speak what they would have. But the Prince, before his own approach, received so many confident messages from the state, and bound himself by such indissoluble engagements, that I think their nuptials must go forwards, and that the Princess is resolved to be ruled.

Cler.

Cler. Sir, it is thought, with her he shall enjoy both these kingdoms of Sicily and Calabria.

Dion. Sir, it is, without controversy, so meant. But 'twill be a troublesome labour for him to enjoy both these kingdoms with safety, the right heir to one of them living, and living so virtuously; especially, the people admiring the bravery of his mind, and lamenting his injuries.

Cler. Who, Philaster?

Dion. Yes, whose father, we all know, was by our late King of Calabria unrighteously deposed from his fruitful Sicily. Myself drew some blood in those wars, which I would give my hand to be washed from.

Cler. Sir, my ignorance in state-policy will not let me know why, Philaster being heir to one of these kingdoms, the King should suffer him to walk abroad with such free liberty.

Dion. Sir, it seems your nature is more constant than to enquire after state-news. But the King, of late, made a hazard of both the kingdoms of Sicily and his own, with offering but to imprison Philaster; at which the city was in arms, not to be charmed down by any state-order or proclamation, till they saw Philaster ride through the streets, pleased, and without a guard; at which they threw their hats and their arms from them, some to make bonfires, some to drink, all for his deliverance. Which, wise men say, is the cause the King labours to bring in the power of a foreign nation to awe his own with.

[*Flourish.*]

Ibra. Peace; the King.

SCENE *draws, and discovers the King, Pharamond, Arethusa, and Train.*

King. To give a stronger testimony of love
Than 'sickly' promises, ' (which commonly
' In princes find both birth and burial
' In one breath)' we have drawn you, worthy Sir,
To make your fair indearments to our daughter,
And worthy services known to our subjects,
' Now lov'd and wonder'd at.' Next, our intent
To plant you deeply, our immediate heir
Both to our blood and kingdoms. ' For this lady,

' (The

' (The best part of your life, as you confirm me,
 ' And I believe) though her few years and sex
 ' Yet teach her nothing but her fears and blushes;
 ' Think not, dear Sir, these undivided parts,
 ' That must mould up a virgin, are put on
 ' To shew her so, as borrow'd ornaments,
 ' To speak her perfect love to you, or add
 ' An artificial shadow to her nature.'

Last, noble son, (for so I now must call you)
 What I have done thus public, is ' not only
 ' To add a comfort in particular
 ' To you or me, but all; and' to confirm
 The nobles, and the gentry of these kingdoms,
 By oath to your succession, which shall be
 Within this month at most.

Pba. Kissing your white hand, mistress, I take leave,
 To thank your royal father; and thus far
 To be my own free trumpet. Understand,
 Great King, and these your subjects, gentlemen,
 Believe me, in a word, a prince's word,
 There shall be nothing to make up a kingdom
 Mighty and flourishing, defended, fear'd,
 Equal to be commanded and obey'd,
 But through the travels of my life I'll find it,
 And tie it to this country. And I vow,
 My reign shall be so easy to the subject,
 That ev'ry man shall be his prince himself,
 And his own law: (yet I his prince and law)
 And, dearest lady, let me say, you are
 The blessed'st living; for, sweet Princess, you
 Shall make him yours for whom great queens must die.

Thra. Miraculous!

Cler. This speech calls him Spaniard, being nothing but
 A large inventory of his own commendations.
 But here comes one more worthy those large speeches,
 Than the large speaker of them.

Enter Philaster.

Pbi. Right noble Sir, as low as my obedience,
 And with a heart as loyal as my knee,
 I beg your favour.

King. Rise; you have it, Sir.
 Speak your intents, Sir.

Pbi. Shall I speak them freely?

Be still my royal Sovereign——

King. As a subject,

We give you freedom.

Dion. Now it heats.

Pbi. Then thus I turn

My language to you, Prince, you, foreign man.

Ne'er stare, nor put on wonder; for you must
Indure me, and you shall. This earth you tread on,
(A dowry, as you hope, with this fair Princess)

By my dead father (Oh, I had a father,
Whose memory I bow to!) was not left

To your inheritance, and I up and living,

Having myself about me, and my sword,

The souls of all my name, and memories,

These arms and some few friends, besides the gods,

To part so calmly with it, and sit still,

And say, I might have been. I tell thee, Pharamond,

When thou art king, look I be dead and rotten,

And my name ashes. For, hear me, Pharamond,

This very ground thou goest on, this fat earth,

My father's friends made fertile with their faiths,

Before that day of shame, shall gape, and swallow

Thee and thy nation, like a hungry grave,

Into her hidden bowels. Prince, it shall;

By Nemesis, it shall.

King. You do displease us.

You are too bold.

Pbi. No, Sir, I am too tame,

Too much a turtle, a thing born without passion,

A faint shadow, that every drunken cloud sails over,

And maketh nothing.

Pba. What you have seen in me to stir offence

I cannot find, unless it be this lady,

Offer'd into mine arms, with the succession,

Which I must keep, though it hath pleas'd your fury

To mutiny within you. The King grants it,

And I dare make it mine. You have your answer.

Pbi. If thou wert sole inheritor to him

That made the world his, and were Pharamond

As truly valiant as I feel him cold,

And ring'd among the choicest of his friends,

And from this presence, spite of all these stops,
You should hear further from me.

King. Sir, you wrong the Prince.

I gave you not this freedom to brave our best friends;
You do deserve our frown. Go to; be better temper'd.

Pbi. It must be, Sir, when I am nobler us'd.

King. Philaster, tell me

The injuries you aim at in your riddles.

Pbi. If you had my eyes, Sir, and sufferance,
My griefs upon you, and my broken fortunes,
My wants great, and now nought but hopes and fears,
My wrongs would make ill riddles to be laughed at.
Dare you be still my King, and right me not?

King. Go to;

Be more yourself, as you respect our favour;
You'll stir us else. Sir, I must have you know, [we
That you're, and shall be, at our pleasure, 'what fashion
'Will put upon you.' Smooth your brow, or, by the
gods——

Pbi. I am dead, Sir; you're my fate. It was not I
Said I was wrong'd. I carry all about me
My weak stars led me to, all my weak fortunes.
Who dares in all this presence speak, (that is
But man of flesh, and may be mortal) tell me,
I do not most entirely love this Prince,
And honour his full virtues?

King. Sure he's possess'd!

Pbi. Yes, with my father's spirit. It's here, O King!
A dangerous spirit; now he tells me, King,
I was a king's heir, bids me be a king,
And whispers to me, these be all my subjects.
'Tis strange, he will not let me sleep, but dives
Into my fancy, and there gives me shapes
That kneel, and do me service, cry me king:
But I'll suppress him; he's a factious spirit,
And will undo me. Noble Sir, your hand;
I am your servant.

King. Away; I do not like this.

For this time I pardon your wild speech:

[*Exeunt King, Pha. Are. and train.*

Dion. See how his fancy labours. Has he not
Spoke homely, and bravely? What a dangerous train

B. 2^d Did

Did he give fire to ! How he shook the King !
 Made his soul melt within him, and his blood
 Run into whey ! It stood upon his brow,
 Like a cold winter dew.

Pbi. Gentlemen,

You have no suit to me ; I am no minion.
 You stand, methinks, like men that would be courtiers,
 If you could well be flatter'd at that price,
 Not to undo your children. You're all honest.
 Go, get you home again, and make your country
 A virtuous court, to which your great ones may,
 In their diseased age, retire, and live recluse.

Cle. How do you, worthy Sir ?

Pbi. Well, very well,

And so well, that, if the King please, I find
 I may live many years.

Dion. The King must please,

Whilst we know what you are, and who you are,
 Your wrongs and injuries. Shrink not, worthy Sir,
 But add your father to you ; in whose name
 We'll waken all the gods, and conjure up
 The rods of vengeance, the abused people,
 Who, like to raging torrents, shall swell high,
 And so begirt the dens of these male-dragons,
 That, through the strongest safety, they shall beg
 For mercy at your sword's point.

Pbi. Friends, no more ;

Our ears may be corrupted. 'Tis an age
 We dare not trust our wills to. Do you love me ?

Tbra. Do we love heav'n and honour ?

Pbi. My Lord Dion ;

You had a virtuous gentlewoman call'd you father :
 Is she yet alive ?

Dion. Most honour'd Sir, she is ;

And for the penance but of an idle dream,
 Has undertook a tedious pilgrimage.

Enter a Lady.

Pbi. Is it to me, or any of these gentlemen you come ?

Lady. To you, brave Lord ; the Princess would intreat
 your present company.

Pbi. Kifs her fair hand, and say, I will attend her.

Dion. Do you know what you do ?

Pbi.

Phi. Yes; go to see a woman.

Cler. But do you weigh the danger you are in?

Phi. Danger in a sweet face!

Her eye may shoot me dead, or those true red
And white friends in her face may steal my soul out;
There's all the danger in't. But be what may,
Her single name hath armed me. [*Exit.*

Dion. Go on;

And be as truly happy as thou art fearless.

Come, gentlemen, let's make our friends acquainted,
Lest the King prove false. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE changes to another apartment.

Enter Arethusa and a Lady.

Are. Comes he not?

Lady. Madam?

Are. Will Philaster come?

Lady. Dear Madam, you were wont
To credit me at first.

Are. But didst thou tell me so?

I am forgetful, and my woman's strength
Is so o'ercharg'd with danger like to grow
About my marriage, that these under things
Dare not abide in such a troubled sea.
How look'd he, when he told thee he would come?

Lady. Why, well.

Are. And not a little fearful?

Lady. Fear, Madam! sure he knows not what it is.

Are. You are all of his faction; the whole court
Is bold in praise of him; whilst I

May live neglected, and do noble things,

As fools in strife throw gold into the sea,
Drown'd in the doing. But I know he fears.

Lady. Fear, Madam! Methought his looks hid more
Of love than fear.

Are. Of love! to whom? To you?

Did you deliver those plain words I sent
With such a winning gesture, and quick look,
That you have caught him?

Lady. Madam, I mean to you.

Are. Of love to me! Alas! thy ignorance
Lest thee not see the crosses of our births.

Nature, that loves not to be question'd why
 She did or this, or that, but has her ends,
 And knows she does well, never gave the world
 Two things so opposite, so contrary,
 As he and I am.

Lady. Madam, I think I hear him.

Arc. Bring him in.

[*Exit Lady.*]

You gods, that would not have your dooms withstood,
 Whose holy wisdoms at this time it is
 To make the passion of a feeble maid
 The way unto your justice, I obey.

Re-enter Lady and Philaster.

Lady. Here is my Lord Philaster.

Arc. Oh! 'tis well.

Withdraw yourself.

[*Exit Lady.*]

Phi. Madam, your messenger
 Made me believe you wish'd to speak with me.

Arc. 'Tis true, Philaster.

Have you known,
 That I have ought detracted from your worth?
 Have I in person wrong'd you? Or have set
 My baser instruments to throw disgrace
 Upon your virtues?

Phi. Never, Madam, you.

Arc. Why then should you, in such a public place,
 Injure a princess, and a scandal lay
 Upon my fortunes, 'fain'd to be so great,
 Calling a great part of my dowry in question?

Phi. Madam, 'this truth, which I shall speak, will
 'Foolish. But' for your fair and virtuous self, [seem
 I could afford myself to have no right
 To any thing you wish'd.]

Arc. Philaster, know,

I must enjoy these kingdoms of Calabria
 And Sicily. By fate, I die, Philaster,
 If I not calmly may enjoy them both.

Phi. I would do much to save that noble life;
 Yet would be loth to have posterity
 Find in our stories, that Philaster gave
 His right unto a sceptre and a crown,
 To save a lady's longing.

Arc.

Are. Nay, then, hear ;
I must, and will have them, and more.

Pbi. What more ? Say, you would have my life ;
Why, I will give it you ; for it is of me
A thing so loath'd and unto you that ask
Of so poor use, I will unmov'dly hear.

Are. Fain would I speak ; and yet the words are such
I have to say, and do so ill beseem
The mouth of woman, that I wish them said,
And yet am loth to utter them. Oh, turn
Away thy face ! a little bend thy looks !
Spare, spare me, Oh, Philaster !

Pbi. What means this ?

Are. But that my fortunes hang upon this hour,
But that occasion urges me to speak,
And that perversely to keep silence now
Would doom me to a life of wretchedness,
I could not thus have summon'd thee, to tell thee,
The thoughts of Pharamond are scorpions to me,
More horrible than danger, pain, or death !
Yes—I must have thy kingdoms—must have thee.

Pbi. How, me !

Are. Thy love ! without which, all the land
Discovered yet, will serve me for no use,
But to be buried in.

Pbi. Is't possible ?

Are. With it, it were too little to bestow
On thee. Now, though thy breath may strike me dead,
(Which, know, it may) I have unripp'd my breast.

Pbi. Madam, you are too full of noble thoughts,
To lay a train for this contemned life,
Which you may have for asking. To suspect
Were base, where I deserve no ill. Love you !
By all my hopes, I do, above my life.
But how this passion should proceed from you.
So violently——

Are. Another soul into my body shot,
Could not have fill'd me with more strength and spirit,
Than this thy breath. But spend not hasty time
In seeking how I came thus. 'Tis the gods,
The gods, that make me so ; and sure our love
Will be the nobler, and the better bless'd,

In that the secret justice of the gods
Is mingled with it. Let us leave and part,
Lest some unwelcome guest should fall betwixt.

Pbi. 'Twill be ill,
I should abide here long.

Are. 'Tis true, and worse
You should come often. How shall we devise
To hold intelligence, that our true loves,
On any new occasion, may agree,
What path is best to tread.

Pbi. I have a boy,
Sent by the gods, I hope, to this intent,
Not yet seen in the court. Hunting the buck,
I found him sitting by a fountain-side,
Of which he borrow'd some to quench his thirst,
And paid the nymph again as much in tears.
A garland lay by him, made by himself,
Of many several flowers, bred in the bay,
Stuck in that mystic order, that the rareness
Delighted me; but ever when he turned
His tender eyes upon them, he would weep,
As if he meant to make them grow again.
Seeing such pretty helpless innocence
Dwell in his face, I ask'd him all his story;
He told me, that his parents gently dy'd,
Leaving him to the mercy of the fields,
Which gave him roots; and of the crystal springs,
Which did not stop their courses; and the sun,
Which still, he thank'd him, yielded him his light;
Then took he up his garland, and did shew
What every flower, as country people hold,
Did signify; and how all, ordered thus,
Expres'd his grief; and to my thoughts did read
The prettiest lecture of his country art
That could be wish'd; so that, methought, I could
Have studied it. I gladly entertain'd him,
Who was as glad to follow; and have got
The trustiest, loving'st, and the gentlest boy,
That ever master kept. Him will I send
To wait on you; and bear our hidden love.

Enter Lady,

Are. 'Tis well; no more.

Lady. Madam, the Prince is come to do you service.

Are. What will you do, Philaster, with yourself?

Dear, hide thyself. Bring in the Prince.

Pbi. Hide me from Pharamond!

When thunder speaks, which is the voice of Jove,

Though I do reverence, yet I hide me not.

Are. Then, good Philaster, give him scope and way

In what he says; for he is apt to speak

What you are loth to hear. For my sake do.

Pbi. I will.

Enter Pharamond.

Pba. My princely mistress, as true lovers ought,

I come to kiss these fair hands; and to shew,

In outward ceremonies, the dear love

Writ in my heart.

Pbi. If I shall have an answer no directlier,

I am gone.

Pba. To what would he have an answer?

Are. To his claim unto the kingdom.

Pba. I did forbear you, Sir, before the King.

Pbi. Good Sir, do so still; I would not talk with you;

Pba. But now the time is fitter.

Pbi. Pharamond,

I loath to brawl with such a blast as thou,

Who art nought but a valiant voice. But if

Thou shalt provoke me further, men will say,

Thou wert, and not lament it.

Pba. Do you flight

My greatness so, and in the chamber of the Princess?

Pbi. It is a place, to which, I must confess,

I owe a reverence; but wer't the church,

Ay, at the altar, there's no place so safe,

Where thou dar'st injure me, but I dare punish thee.

'Farewel.'

[*Exit.*]

Pba. Insolent boaster! offer but to mention

Thy right to any kingdom——

Are. Let him go;

He is not worth your care.

Pba. My Arethusa!

I hope our hearts are knit; and yet so slow

State ceremonies are, it may be long

Before our hands be so. If then you please,

Being

Being agreed in heart, let us not wait
 For pomp and circumstance, but solemnize
 A private nuptial, and anticipate
 Delights, and so foretaste our joys to come.

Are. My father, Sir, is all in all to me;
 Nor can I give my fancy or my will
 More scope than he shall warrant. When he bids
 My eye look up to Pharamond for lord,
 I know my duty; but, till then, farewell. [Exit.]

Pba. Nay, but there's more in this—some happier man;
 Perhaps Philaster——'Sdeath! let me not think on't—
 She must be watch'd—He too must be ta'en care of,
 Or all my hopes of her and empire rest
 Upon a sandy bottom——If she means
 To wed me, well; if not, I swear revenge. [Exit.]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *an Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter Philaster and Bellario.

PHILASTER.

AND thou shalt find her honourable, boy;
 Full of regard unto thy tender youth.
 For thine own modesty, and for my sake,
 Apter to give, than thou wilt be to ask,
 Ay, or deserve.

Bel. Sir, you did take me up
 When I was nothing; and only yet am something,
 By being yours. You trusted me, unknown;
 And that which you are apt to construe now,
 A simple innocence in me, perhaps
 Might have been craft, the cunning of a boy
 Harden'd in lies and theft; yet ventur'd you
 To part my miseries and me; for which
 I never can expect to serve a lady,
 That bears more honour in her breast than you.

Pbi. But, boy, it will prefer thee; thou art young.
 And bear'st a childish, overflowing love

To.

To them that clap thy cheeks, and speak thee fair.
 But when thy judgment comes to rule those passions,
 Thou wilt remember best those careful friends,
 That plac'd thee in the noblest way of life.
 She is a princess I prefer thee to.

Bel. In that small time that I have seen the world,
 I never knew a man hasty to part with
 A servant he thought trusty. I remember,
 My father would prefer the boys he kept
 To greater men than he; but did it not,
 Till they were grown too saucy for himself.

Pbi. Why, gentle boy, I find no fault at all
 In thy behaviour.

Bel. Sir, if I have made
 A fault of ignorance, instruct my youth;
 I shall be willing, if not apt, to learn.
 Age and experience will adorn my mind
 With larger knowledge; and if I have done
 A wilful fault, think me not past all hope
 For once. What master holds so strict a hand
 Over his boy, that he will part with him
 Without one warning? Let me be corrected,
 To break my stubbornness, if it be so,
 Rather than turn me off, and I shall mend.

Pbi. Thy love doth plead so prettily to stay,
 That, trust me, I could weep to part with thee.
 Alas, I do not turn thee off! thou know'st,
 It is my business that doth call thee hence;
 And when thou art with her, thou dwell'st with me.
 Think so, and 'tis so; and when time is full,
 That thou hast well discharg'd this heavy trust,
 Laid on so weak a one, I will again
 With joy receive thee; as I live, I will.
 Nay, weep not, gentle boy; 'tis more than time
 Thou didst attend the Princess.

Bel. I am gone.
 But since I am to part with you, my Lord,
 And none knows whether I shall live to do
 More service for you, take this little prayer:
 Heav'n bless your loves, your fights, all your designs;
 May sick men, if they have your wish, be well;
 And Heav'n hate those you curse, tho' I be one.

[*Exit.*
Pbi.]

Pbi. The love of boys unto their lords is strange !
 I have read wonders of it : yet this boy,
 For my sake, if a man may judge by looks
 And speech, would out-do story. I may see
 A day to pay him for his loyalty.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE *changes to Arethusa's Apartment.*

Enter Arethusa and a Lady.

Are. Where's the boy ? Where's Bellario ?

Lady. Within, Madam.

Are. Gave you him gold to buy him cloaths ?

Lady. I did.

Are. And has he done't ?

Lady. Madam, not yet.

Are. 'Tis a pretty, sad talking boy, is it not ?

Enter Galatea.

Oh, you are welcome ! What good news ?

Gal. As good as any one can tell your Grace,
 That says she has done that you would have wish'd.

Are. Hast thou discovered then ?

Gal. I have. Your Prince,
 Brave Pharamond, 's disloyal.

Are. And with whom ?

Gal. Ev'n with the lady we suspect ; with Megra.

Are. Oh, where ! and when ?

Gal. I can discover all.

Are. The King shall know this ; and if destiny,
 To whom we dare not say, It shall not be,
 Have not decreed it so in lasting leaves,
 Whose smallest characters were never chang'd,
 This hated match with Pharamond shall break.
 Run back into the presence, mingle there
 Again with other ladies ; leave the rest
 To me.

[*Exit Gal.*]

Where's the boy ?

Lady. Within, Madam.

Are. Go, call him hither.

[*Exit Lady.*]

Enter Bellario.

Why art thou ever melancholy, Sir ?

You are sad to change your service. Is't not so ?

Bel. Madam, I have not chang'd ; I wait on you,
 To do him service.

Are.

P H I L A S T E R.

Are. Thou disclaim'st in me.

Tell me, Bellario; thou canst sing and play?

Bel. If grief will give me leave, Madam; I can.

Are. Alas! what kind of grief can thy years know?
Had'st a cross master when thou went'st to school?
Thou art not capable of other grief.

Thy brows and cheeks are smooth as waters be,
When no breath troubles them. Believe me, boy,
Care seeks out wrinkled brows, and hollow eyes,
And builds himself caves to abide in them.
Come, Sir, tell me truly, does your lord love me?

Bel. Love, Madam! I know not what it is.

Are. Canst thou know grief, and never yet knew'st love?
Thou art deceiv'd, boy. Does he speak of me,
As if he wish'd me well?

Bel. If it be love,

To forget all respect of his own friends,
In thinking on your face; if it be love,
To sit cross-arm'd, and sigh away the day,
Mingled with starts, crying your name as loud
And hastily, as men i' the streets do fire;
If it be love, to weep himself away,
When he but hears of any lady dead,
Or kill'd, because it might have been your chance;
If, when he goes to rest, (which will not be)
'Twixt ev'ry prayer he says, he names you once,
As others drop a bead, be to be in love,
Then, Madam, I dare swear he loves you.

Are. Oh!

You are a cunning boy, taught to deceive,
For your lord's credit. But thou know'st, a falsehood
That bears this sound, is welcomer to me,
Than any truth, that says, he loves me not.
Lead the way, boy. Do you attend me too;
'Tis thy lord's business hastes me thus. *Away.* [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to another Apartment in the Palace.

Enter Megra and Pharamond.

Megra. What then am I? A poor neglected slave!
Have I then been an idle toying she,
To fool away an hour or two withal,
And then thrown by for ever?

Pha. Nay, have patience.

Meg. Patience! I shall go mad! Why, I shall be
A mark for all the pages of the court
To bend their wit upon.

Pha. It shall not be.

She whose dishonour is not known abroad,
Is not at all dishonour'd.

Meg. Not dishonour'd!

Have we then been so chary of our fame,
So cautious, think you, in our course of love,
No blot of calumny has fall'n upon it? Say,
What charm has veil'd Suspicion's hundred eyes,
And who shall stop the cruel hand of Scorn?

Pha. Cease your complaints, reproachful and unkind!
What could I do? Obedience to my father,
My country's good, my plighted faith, my fame,
Each circumstance of state and duty, ask'd
The tender of my hand to Arethusa.

Meg. Talk not of Arethusa! She, I know,
Would fain get rid of her most precious bargain.
She is for softer dalliance; she has got
A cherub, a young Hylas, an Adonis!

Pha. What mean you?

Meg. She, good faith, has her Bellario!
A boy—about eighteen—a pretty boy!
Why, this is he that must, when you are wed,
Sit by your pillow, like a young Apollo,
Sing, play upon the lute, with hand and voice
Binding your thoughts in sleep. She does provide him
For you, and for herself.

Pha. Injurious Megra!

Oh, add not shame to shame! To rob a lady
Of her good name thus, is an heinous sin,
Not to be pardon'd: yet, though false as hell,
'Twill never be redeem'd, if it be sown
Amongst the people, fruitful to increase
All evil they shall hear.

Meg. It shall be known:

Nay, more, by Heav'n, 'tis true! a thousand things
Speak it beyond all contradiction true.
Observe how brave she keeps him: how he stands
Far ever at her beck. There's not an hour,

Sacred howe'er to female privacy,
 But he's admitted; - and in open court,
 Their tell-tale eyes hold soft discourse together.
 Why, why is all this? Think you she's content
 To look upon him?

Pba. Make it but appear,
 That she has play'd the wanton with this stripling,
 All Spain, as well as Sicily, shall know
 Her foul dishonour. I'll disgrace her first,
 Then leave her to her shame.

Meg. You are resolv'd?

Pba. Most constantly.

Meg. The rest remains with me.

I will produce such proofs, that she shall know
 I did not leave our country, and degrade
 Our Spanish honour and nobility,
 To stand a mean attendant in her chamber,
 With hoodwink'd eyes, and finger on my lips.
 What I have seen, I'll speak; what known, proclaim;
 Her story shall be general as the wind,
 And fly as far. I will about it straight.
 Expect news from me, Pharamond. Farewel. [*Exit.*]

Pba. True or not true, one way I like this well;
 For I suspect the Princess loves me not.
 If Megra's charge prove malice, her own ruin
 Must follow, and I'm quit of her for ever.
 But if she makes suspicious truths; or if,
 Which were as deep confusion, Arethusa
 Disdain'd our proffer'd union, and Philaster
 Stand foremost in her heart, let Megra's charge
 Wear but the semblance and the garb of truth,
 They shall afford me measure of revenge.
 I will look on with an indifferent eye,
 Prepar'd for either fortune; or to wed,
 If she prove faithful, or repulse her sham'd. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *the Presence Chamber.*

Enter Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, Megra, and Galatea.

Dion. Come, ladies, shall we talk a round?

Gal. 'Tis late.

Meg. 'Tis all

My eyes will do, to lead me to my bed.

Enter Pharamond.

Thra. The Prince!

Pba. Not a-bed, ladies! You're good sitters up.
What think you of a pleasant dream, to last
'Till morning?

Enter Arethusa and Bellario.

Are. 'Tis well, my Lord; you're courting of ladies.
Is't not late; gentlemen?

Cle. Yes, Madam.

Are. Wait you there.

[*Exit Arethusa.*]

Meg. She's jealous, as I live! Look you, my Lord,
The Princess has a boy.

Pba. His form is angel-like.

Dion. Serves he the Princess?

Thra. Yes:

Dion. 'Tis a sweet boy.

Pba. Ladies all, good rest. I mean to kill a buck
To-morrow morning, ere you've done your dreams.

[*Exit Phar.*]

Meg. All happiness attend your Grace. Gentlemen;

Gal. All good night.

[*good rest.*]

[*Exeunt Gal. and Meg.*]

Dion. May your dreams be true to you.

What shall we do, gallants? 'Tis late. The King
Is up still. See, he comes, and Arethusa
With him.

Enter King, Arethusa, and Guard.

King. Look your intelligence be true.

Are. Upon my life, it is. And I do hope
Your Highness will not tie me to a man,
That in the heat of wooing throws me off,
And takes another.

Dion. What should this mean?

King. If it be true,
That lady had much better have embrac'd
Cureless diseases. Get you to your rest.

[*Exeunt Are. and Bel.*]

You shall be righted. Gentlemen, draw near.
Halte, some of you, and cunningly discover
If Megra be in her lodging.

Cle. Sir,
She parted hence but now, with other ladies.

(*King.*)

King. I would speak with her.

Dion. She's here, my Lord.

Enter Megra.

King. Now, lady of honour, where's your honour
No man can fit your palate, but the Prince. [now?

Thou troubled sea of sin; thou wilderness,
Inhabited by wild affections, tell me,
Had you none to pull on with your courtesies
But he that must be mine, and wrong my daughter?
By all the gods! all these, and all the court
Shall hoot thee, and break scurvy jests upon thee,
Make ribald rhimes, and fear thy name on walls.

Meg. I dare, my Lord, your hootings and your clamours.
Your private whispers, and your broader fleerings,
Can no more vex my soul, than this base carriage,
The poor destruction of a lady's honour,
The publishing the weakness of a woman.
But I have vengeance yet in store for some,
Shall, in the utmost scorn you can have of me,
Be joy and nourishment.

King. What means the wanton?
D'ye glory in your shame?

Meg. I will have fellows,
Such fellows in't, as shall make noble mirth.
The princess, your dear daughter, shall stand by me,
On walls, and sung in ballads, any thing.

King. My daughter!

Meg. Yes, your daughter, Arethusa,
The glory of your Sicily, which I,
A stranger to your kingdom, laugh to scorn.
I know her shame, and will discover all;
Nay, will dishonour her. I know the boy
She keeps, a handsome boy, about eighteen;
Know what she does with him, and where, and when.
Come, Sir, you put me to a woman's madness,
The glory of a fury.

King. What boy's this?

Meg. Alas, good-minded Prince!
You know not these things: I will make them plain.
I will not fall alone: what I have known
Shall be as public as a print: all tongues
Shall speak it, as they do the language they

Are born in, as free and commonly : I'll set it
Like a prodigious star, for all to gaze at ;
And that to high and glowing, other realms,
Foreign and far, shall read it there ; and then
Behold the fall of your fair princess too.

[Exit

King. Has she a boy ?

Cle. So, please your grace, I've seen
A boy wait on her, a fair boy.

King. Away ; I'd be alone. Go, get you to your
quarters.

[Exit.

Manet King.

You gods, I see, that who unrighteously
Holds wealth or state from others, shall be curst
In that which meaner men are blest withal :
Ages to come shall know no male of him
Left to inherit, and his name shall be
Blotted from earth. If he have any child,
It shall be crossly match'd. The gods themselves
Shall sow wild strife between her lord and her ;
Or she shall prove his curse who gave her being.
Gods ! if it be your wills—But how can I
Look to be heard of gods, who must be just,
Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong ?

[Exit

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T, III.

SCENE, *The Court.*

Enter Philaster.

PHILASTER.

OH, that I had a sea
Within my breast, to quench the fire I feel !
More circumstances will but fan this fire.
It more afflicts me now, to know by whom
This deed is done, than simply that 'tis done.
Woman, frail sex ! the winds that are let loose
From the four several corners of the earth,
And spread themselves all over sea and land,
Kiss not a chaste one ! Taken with her boy !

Oh,

Oh, that, like beasts, we could not grieve ourselves
 With what we see not! Bulls and rams will fight
 To keep their females standing in their fight;
 But take 'em from them, and you take at once
 Their spleens away; and they will fall again
 Unto their pastures, growing fresh and fat;
 And taste the water of the springs as sweet
 As 'twas before, finding no start in sleep.
 But miserable man— See, see, you gods,

[Seeing Bellario at a distance]

He walks still! and the face you let him wear
 When he was innocent, is still the same,
 Not blasted. Is this justice? Do you mean
 To intrap mortality, that you allow
 Treason so smooth a brow?

Enter Bellario.

I cannot now
 Think he is guilty.

Bel. Health to you, my Lord!

The princess doth commend her love, her life,
 And this unto you. [Gives a letter.]

Phi. Oh, Bellario!

Now I perceive she loves me; she does shew it
 In loving thee, my boy; sh'as made thee brave.

Bel. My Lord, she has attired me past my wish,
 Past my desert; more fit for her attendant,
 Though far unfit for me, who do attend.

Phi. Thou art grown courtly, boy. O, let all women,
 [Reads.]

That love black deeds, learn to dissemble here!
 Here, by this paper she does write to me,
 As if her heart were mines of adamant
 To all the world besides; but, unto me
 A maiden snow that melted with my looks.
 Tell me, my boy, how doth the princess use thee?
 For I shall guess her love to me by that.

Bel. Scarce like her servant, but as if I were
 Something allied to her, or had preserv'd
 Her life three times by my fidelity:
 As mothers fond do use their only sons;
 As I'd use one that's left unto my trust,

For whom my life should pay, if he met harm;
So she does use me.

Pbi. Why, this is wondrous well:

But what kind language does she feed thee with?

Bel. Why, she does tell me, she will trust my youth
With all her loving secrets; and does call me
Her pretty servant; bids me weep no more
For leaving you; she'll see my services
Rewarded; and such words of that soft strain,
That I am nearer weeping when she ends
Than 'ere she spake.

Pbi. This is much better still.

Bel. Are you not ill, my Lord?

Pbi. Ill! No, Bellario.

Bel. Methinks your words
Fall not from off your tongue so evenly,
Nor is there in your looks that quietness,
That I was wont to see.

Pbi. Thou art deceiv'd, boy:
And she stroaks thy head?

Bel. Yes.

Pbi. And does clap thy cheeks?

Bel. She does, my Lord.

Pbi. And she does kiss thee, boy? ha!

Bel. How, my Lord!

Pbi. She kisses thee?

Bel. Not so, my Lord.

Pbi. Come, come, I know she does.

Bel. No, by my life.

Pbi. Why, then, she does not love me. Come, she does,
I bade her do it; I charg'd her by all charms
Of love between us, by the hope of peace
We should enjoy, to yield thee all delights.
Tell me, gentle boy,
Is she not past compare? Is not her breath
Sweet as Arabian winds, when fruits are ripe?
Is she not all a lasting mine of joy?

Bel. Ay, now I see why my disturbed thoughts
Were so perplex'd. When first I went to her,
My heart held augury; you are abus'd;
Some villain has abus'd you: I do see
Whereto you tend. Fall rocks upon his head,

That put this to you ! 'tis some subtle train,
To bring that noble frame of yours to nought.

Pbi. Thou think'st I will be angry with thee ; come,
Thou shalt know all my drift : I hate her more
Than I love happiness ; and plac'd thee there,
To pry with narrow eyes into her deeds.
Hast thou discover'd ? Is she fall'n to lust,
As I would wish her ? Speak some comfort to me.

Bel. My Lord, you did mistake the boy you sent :
Had she a sin that way, hid from the world,
Beyond the name of sin, I would not aid
Her base desires ; but what I came to know
As servant to her, I would not reveal,
To make my life last ages.

Pbi. Oh, my heart !
This is a salve worse than the main disease.
Tell me thy thoughts ; for I will know the least
That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart.
To know it ; I will see thy thoughts as plain
As I do now thy face.

Bel. Why, so you do.
She is (for ought I know) by all the gods,
As chaste as ice ; but were she soul as hell,
And I did know it thus, the breath of kings,
The points of swords, tortures, nor bulls of brass,
Should draw it from me.

Pbi. Then it is no time
To dally with thee ; I will take thy life,
For I do hate thee ; I cou'd curse thee now.

Bel. If you do hate, you could not curse me worse ;
The gods have not a punishment in store
Greater for me, than is your hate.

Pbi. Fie, fie !
So young and so dissembling ! Tell me when
And where thou didst possess her, or let plagues
Fall on me strait, if I destroy thee not !

Bel. Heav'n knows, I never did : and when I lie
To save my life, may I live long and loath'd !
Hew me asunder, and, whilst I can think,
I'll love those pieces you have cut away
Better than those that grow ; and kiss those limbs,
Because you made them so.

Pbi. Fear'st thou not death?
Can boys contemn that?

Bel. Oh, what boy is he
Can be content to live to be a man,
That sees the best of men thus passionate,
Thus without reason?

Pbi. Oh, but thou dost not know
What 'tis to die.

Bel. Yes, I do know, my Lord;
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep,
A quiet resting from all jealousy;
A thing we all pursue: I know, besides,
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost.

Pbi. But there are pains, false boy,
For perjurd souls; think but on these, and then
Thy heart will melt, and thou wilt utter all.

Bel. May they fall all upon me whilst I live,
If I be perjurd, or have ever thought
Of that you charge me with! If I be false,
Send me to suffer in those punishments
You speak of; kill me.

Pbi. Oh, what shou'd I do?
Why, who can but believe him? He does swear
So earnestly, that if it were not true,
The gods would not endure him. Rise, Bellario:
Thy protestations are so deep, and thou
Dost look so truly, when thou utterest them,
That though I know 'em false, as were my hopes,
I cannot urge thee further: but thou wert
To blame to injure me, for I must love
Thy honest looks, and take no vengeance on
Thy tender youth. A love from me to thee
Is firm what'er thou dost. It troubles me,
That I have call'd the blood out of thy cheeks,
That did so well become them. But, good boy,
Let me not see thee more: something is done,
That will distract me, that will make me mad,
If I behold thee; if thou tender'st me,
Let me not see thee.

Bel. I will fly as far
As there is morning, 'ere I give distaste

To that most honour'd mind. But through these tears,
 Shed at my hopeless parting, I can see
 A world of treason practis'd upon you,
 And her, and me. Farewel, for evermore!
 If you shall hear, that sorrow struck me dead,
 And after find me loyal, let there be
 A tear shed from you in my memory,
 And I shall rest at peace. [Exit Bel.

Phi. Blessing be with thee,
 Whatever thou deserv'st! Oh, where shall I
 Ease my breaking heart? Nature, too unkind,
 That gave no medicine for a troubled mind! [Exit Phil.

SCENE, Arethusa's Apartment.

Enter Arethusa.

Are. I marvel, my boy comes not back again.
 But that I know my love will question him
 Over and over; how I slept, wak'd, talk'd!
 How I remembered him, when his dear name
 Was last spoke! 'and how, when I sigh'd, wept, sung,
 And ten thousand such! I should be angry at his stay.

Enter King.

King. What, at your meditations! Who attends you?

Are. None but my single self; I need no guard;
 I do no wrong, nor fear none.

King. Tell me, have you not a boy?

Are. Yes, Sir.

King. What kind of boy?

Are. A page, a waiting-boy.

King. A handsome boy?

Are. I think he be not ugly;
 Well qualified, and dutiful, I know him;
 I took him not for beauty.

King. He speaks, and sings, and plays?

Are. Yes, Sir.

King. About eighteen?

Are. I never ask'd his age.

King. Is he full of service?

Are. By your pardon, why do you ask?

King. Put him away.

Are. Sir!

King.

King. Put him away; 'has done you that good service
Shames me to speak of.

Arc. Good Sir, let me understand you.

King. If you fear me,
Shew it in duty; put away that boy.

Arc. Let me have reason for it, Sir, and then
Your will is my command.

King. Do you not blush to ask it? Cast him off,
Or I shall do the same to you. ' You're one
' Shame with me, and so near unto myself,
' That,' by my life, I dare not tell myself
What you have done.

Arc. What have I done, my Lord?

King. Understand me well;
There be foul whispers stirring—Cast him off,
And suddenly do it. Farewel. [Exit King.]

Arc. Where may a maiden live securely free,
Keeping her honour safe? Not with the living:
They feed upon opinions, errors, dreams,
And make 'em truths. They draw a nourishment
Out of defamings, grow upon disgraces,
And when they see a virtue fortified
Strongly above the battery of their tongues,
Oh, how they cast to sink it: and defeated
(Soul-sick with poison) strike the monuments
Where noble names lie sleeping!

Enter Philaster.

Pbi. Peace to your fairest thoughts, my dearest mistress!

Arc. Oh, my dear servant, I have a war within me.

Pbi. He must be more than man, that makes these
Run into rivers. Sweetest fair, the cause? [crystals]
And as I am your slave, ' tied to your goodness,
' Your creature made again from what I was,
' And newly spirited,' I'll right your honours.

Arc. Oh, my best love; that boy!

Pbi. What boy?

Arc. The pretty boy you gave me——

Pbi. What of him?

Arc. Must be no more mine.

Pbi. Why?

Arc. They are jealous of him.

Pbi. Jealous! who?

Are. The King.

Pbi. Oh, my fortune!

Then 'tis no idle jealousy. Let him go.

Are. Oh, cruel,

Are you hard-hearted too? Who shall now tell you,
How much I lov'd you? Who shall swear it to you,
And weep the tears I send? Who shall now bring you
Letters, rings, bracelets, lose his health in service?
Wake tedious nights in stories of your praise?

'Who now shall sing your crying elegies,

'And strike a sad soul into senseless pictures,

'And make them mourn?' Who shall take up his lute,

And touch it, till he crown a silent sleep

Upon my eye-lid, making me dream and cry,

Oh, my dear, dear Philaster.

Pbi. Oh, my heart!

Would he had broken thee, that made thee know

This lady was not loyal! Mistress, forget

The boy, I'll find thee a far better one.

Are. Oh, never, never, such a boy again,
As my Bellario.

Pbi. 'Tis but your fond affection.

Are. With thee, my boy, farewell for ever

All secrecy in servants: farewell faith,

And all desire to do well for itself:

Let all that shall succeed thee, for thy wrongs,

Sell and betray chaste love!

Pbi. And all this passion for a boy?

Are. He was your boy; you gave him to me, and

The loss of such must have a mourning for:

Pbi. Oh, thou forgetful woman!

Are. How, my Lord?

Pbi. False Arethusa!

Hast thou a medicine to restore my wits,

When I have lost 'em? If not, leave to talk,

And to do thus.

Are. Do what, Sir? 'Would you sleep?'

Pbi. 'For ever, Arethusa.' Oh, you gods!

Give me a worthy patience: have I stood

Naked, alone, the shock of many fortunes?

Have I seen mischiefs numberless and mighty

Grow like a sea upon me? Have I taken

Danger as stern as death into my bosom,
 And laugh'd upon it, made it but a mirth,
 And flung it by? Do I live now like him,
 Under this tyrant king, that languishing
 Hears his sad bell, and sees his mourners? Do I
 Bear all this bravely, and must sink at length
 Under a woman's falsehood? Oh, that boy,
 That cursed boy! None but a villain boy,
 To wrong me with!

Are. Nay, then I am betray'd;
 I feel the plot cast for my overthrow;
 Oh, I am wretched!

Phi. Now you may take that little right I have
 To this poor kingdom: give it to your boy!
 For I have no joy in it. Some far place
 Where never womankind durst set her foot,
 For bursting with her poisons, must I seek,
 And live to curse you:
 There dig a cave, and preach to birds and beasts
 What woman is, and help to save them from you.
 How heav'n is in your eyes, but in your hearts
 More hell than hell has; how your tongues, like scorpions,
 Both heal and poison: how your thoughts are woven
 With thousand changes in one subtle web,
 And worn so by you. How that foolish man,
 That reads the story of a woman's face,
 And dies believing it, is lost forever.
 How all the good you have is but a shadow,
 I'th' morning with you, and at night behind you,
 Past and forgotten. How your vows are frost,
 Fast for a night; and with the next sun gone.
 How you are, being taken all together,
 A mere confusion, and so dead a chaos,
 That love cannot distinguish. These sad texts,
 Till my last hour, I am bound to utter of you.
 So farewell all my woe, all my delight!

[*Exit.*

Are. Be merciful, ye gods, and strike me dead.
 What way have I deserv'd this? Make my breast
 Transparent as pure crystal, that the world,
 Jealous of me, may see the foulest thought
 My heart holds. Where shall a woman turn her eyes,
 To find out constancy? 'Save me,' how 'black,'

Enter

Enter Bellario.

'And' guiltily, methinks, that boy looks now!
 Oh, thou dissembler, that, before thou spak'st,
 Wert in thy cradle false! Sent to make lies,
 And betray innocents; thy Lord and thou
 May glory in the ashes of a maid
 Fool'd by her passion; but the conquest is
 Nothing so great as wicked. Fly away,
 Let my command force thee to that, which shame
 Should do without it. If thou understoodst
 The loathed office thou hast undergone,
 Why, thou wouldst hide thee under heaps of hills,
 Lest men should dig and find thee.

Bel. Oh, what god.

Angry with men, hath sent this strange disease
 Into the noblest minds? Madam, this grief
 You add unto me is no more than drops
 To seas, for which they are not seen to swell;
 My lord hath struck his anger through my heart,
 And let out all the hope of future joys;
 You need not bid me fly; I come to part,
 To take my latest leave.

I durst not run away in honesty,
 From such a lady, like a boy that stole,
 Or made some grievous fault. Farewel! The gods
 Assist you in your suff'rings! Hasty time
 Reveal the truth to your abused lord,
 And mine; that he may know your worth! Whilst I
 Go seek out some forgotten place to die. [Exit.]

Are. Peace guide thee! thou hast overthrown me once,
 Yet, if I had another heaven to lose,
 Thou, or another villain, with thy looks,
 Might talk me out of it.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. Madam, the King would hunt, and calls for you
 With earnestness.

Are. I attend him.

Diana, if thou canst rage with a maid,
 As with a man, let me discover thee
 Bathing, and turn me to a fearful hind,
 That I may die pursu'd by cruel hounds,
 And have my story written in my wounds.

[Exeunt.]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *a Wood.**Enter Philaster.*

PHILASTER.

OH, that I had been nourish'd in these woods
 With milk of goats, and acorns, and not known
 The right of crowns, nor the dissembling trains
 Of women's looks; but digg'd myself a cave,
 ' Where I, my fire, my cattle, and my bed,
 ' Might have been shut together in one shed;
 And then had taken me some mountain girl,
 Beaten with winds, chaste as the harden'd rocks
 Whereon she dwells; that might have strew'd my bed
 With leaves, and reeds, and with the skins of beasts
 Our neighbours; ' and have borne at her big breasts
 ' My large coarse issue!' This had been a life
 Free from vexation!

*Enter Bellario.**Bel.* Oh, wicked men!

An innocent may walk safe among beasts:
 Nothing assaults me here. See, my griev'd lord
 Looks as his soul were searching out the way
 To leave his body. Pardon me, that must
 Break thro' thy last command; for I must speak:
 You, that are griev'd, can pity; hear, my Lord.

Pbi. Is there a creature yet so miserable,
 That I can pity?

Bel. Oh, my noble Lord,
 View my strange fortune, and bestow on me,
 According to your bounty (if my service
 Can merit nothing) so much as may serve
 To keep that little piece I hold of life
 From cold and hunger.

Pbi. Is it thou? ' Begone!
 Go, sell those misbeseeming cloaths thou wear'st,
 And feed thyself with them.

Bel. Alas! my Lord, I can get nothing for them:
 The silly country people think 'tis treason
 To touch such gay things.

Pbi.

Pbi. Now, by my life, this is
Unkindly done, to vex me with thy sight;
Thou'rt fall'n again to thy dissembling trade:
How shouldst thou think to cozen me again?
Remains there yet a plague untry'd for me?
Ev'n so thou wept'st, and look'd'st, and spok'st, when first
I took thee up: curse on the time! If thy
Commanding tears can work on any other,
Use thy old art, I'll not betray it. Which
Way wilt thou take, that I may shun thee? for
Thine eyes are poison unto mine; and I
Am loth to grow in rage. This way, or that way?

Bel. Any will serve. But I will chuse to have
That path in chace that leads unto my grave.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Dion and the Woodmen.

Dion. This is the strangest sudden chance! You,
woodman! ———

1 Wood. My Lord 'Dion.'

Dion. Saw you a lady come this way on a sable horse
studded with stars of white?

2 Wood. Was she not young 'and tall?'

Dion. Yes. Rode she to the wood, or to the plain?

2 Wood. Faith, my Lord, we saw none. [*Exeunt Wood.*]

Dion. Pox of your questions then!

Enter Cleremont.

What, is she found?

Cle. Nor will be, I think. There's already a thou-
sand fatherless tales amongst us; some say, her horse run
away with her; some, a wolf pursued her; others, it
was a plot to kill her; and that armed men were seen in
the wood: but, questionless, she rode away willingly.

Enter King and Thrasiline.

King. Where is she?

Cle. Sir, I cannot tell.

King. How is that?

Sir, speak you where she is.

Dion. Sir, I do not know.

King. You have betray'd me, you have let me lose
The jewel of my life. Go, bring her me,
And set her here before me; 'tis the King
Will have it so. Alas! what are we kings?

Why do you, gods, place us above the rest ;
 To be serv'd, flatter'd, and ador'd, till we
 Believe we hold within our hands your thunder :
 And when we come to try the pow'r we have, -
 There's not a leaf shakes at our threatenings.
 I have sinn'd, 'tis true, and here stand to be punish'd ;
 Yet would not thus be punish'd.

Enter Pharamond and Galatea.

King. What, is the found ?

Pha. No, we have ta'en her horse.

He gallop'd empty by ; there is some treason :

You, Galatea, rode with her into the wood ; why left you

Gal. She did command me. [her ?

King. You're all cunning to obey us for our hurt ;
 But I will have her.

Run all, disperse yourselves ; the man that finds her,
 Or (if she be kill'd) the traitor ; I'll make him great.

Pha. Come, let us seek.

King. Each man a several way ; here I myself.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE, *Another Part of the Wood.*

Enter Arethusa.

Are. Where am I now ? Feet, find me out a way,
 Without the counsel of my troubled head ;

I'll follow you boldly about these woods,

O'er mountains, thorough brambles, pits, and floods :

Heaven, I hope, will ease me. I am sick.

Enter Bellario.

Bel. Yonder's my lady ; heav'n knows, I want nothing,
 Because I do not wish to live ; yet I

Will try her charity. O hear, you that have plenty,

And from that flowing store, drop some on dry ground : see,

The lively red is gone to guard her heart ; [She faints.]

I fear, she faints. Madam, look up ; she breathes not ;

Open once more those rosy twins, and send

Unto my Lord, your latest farewell ; Oh, she stirs :

How is it, Madam ? Speak some comfort.

Are. 'Tis not gently done,

To put me in a miserable life,

And hold me there ; I pray thee, let me go,

I shall do best without thee ; I am well.

Enter

Enter Philaster.

Phi. I am to blame to be so much in rage :
I'll tell her coolly, when and where I heard
This killing truth. I will be temperate
In speaking, and as just in hearing it. [good gods,
Oh, monstrous ! [*Seeing them,*] Tempt me not, ye gods !
Tempt not a frail man ! what's he, that has a heart,
But he must ease it here ?

Bel. My Lord, help the Princess.

Are. I am well, forbear.

Phi. Let me love lightning, let me be embrac'd
And kiss'd by scorpions, or adore the eyes
Of basilisks, rather than trust the tongues
Of hell-bred women ! Some good gods look down,
And shrink these veins up ; stick me here a stone,
Lasting to ages in the memory
Of this damn'd act ! Hear me, you wicked ones !
You have put hills of fire into this breast,
Not to be quench'd with tears ; for which may guilt
Sit on your bosoms ! at your meals, and beds,
Despair await you ! What, before my face ?
Poison of asps between your lips ! Diseases
Be your best issues ! Nature make a curse,
And throw it on you !

Are. Dear Philaster, leave
To be enrag'd, and hear me.

Phi. I have done :
Forgive my passion. Not the calmed sea,
When Æolus locks up his windy brood,
Is less disturb'd than I. I'll make you know it.
Dear Arethusa, do but take this sword,
And search how temperate a heart I have ;
Then you, and this your boy, may live and reign
In sin, without controul. Wilt thou, Bellario ?
I pr'ythee, kill me ; ' thou art poor, and may'st
' Nourish ambitious thoughts, when I am dead :
' This way were freer.'

Are. Kill you !

Bel. Not for a world.

Phi. I blame not thee,
Bellario ; thou hast done but that which gods
Would have transform'd themselves to do ! ' Begone,
' Leave

‘ Leave me without reply ; this is the last
 ‘ Of all our meeting. Kill me with this sword !
 ‘ Be wise, or worse will follow ; we are two
 ‘ Earth cannot bear at once.’ Resolve to do, or suffer.

Are. If my fortunes be so good to let me fall
 Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death.
 Yet tell me this, will there be no slanders,
 No jealousies in the other world, no ill there ?

Pbi. None.

Are. Shew me then the way.

Pbi. Then guide

My feeble hand, you that have pow’r to do it !
 For I must perform a piece of justice. If your youth
 Have any way offended heav’n, let pray’rs
 Short and effectual reconcile you to it.

Enter a Country Fellow.

Coun. I’ll see the King if he be in the forest ; I have
 hunted him these two hours ; if I should come home
 and not see him, my sisters would laugh at me.
 There’s a courtier with his sword drawn, by this hand,
 upon a woman, I think.

Are. I am prepar’d.

Pbi. Are you at peace ?

Are. With heav’n and earth.

Pbi. May they divide thy soul and body !

Coun. Hold, dastard ! offer to strike a woman !

[*Preventing him.*

Pbi. Leave us, good friend.

Are. What ill-bred man art thou, thus to intrude thy-

‘ Upon our private sports, our recreations ?’ [self

Coun. I understand you not ; but I know the knave
 wou’d have hurt you.

Pbi. Pursue thy own affairs ; it will be ill [me to.
 To multiply blood upon my head, which thou wilt force

Coun. I know not your rhetoric ; but I can lay it on,
 if you offer to touch the woman.

Pbi. Slave, take what thou deserv’st. [They fight.

Are. Heav’n’s guard my Lord !

Bel. Unmanner’d boor !—my Lord !—

[*Interposing, is wounded.*

Pbi. I hear the tread of people : I am hurt.
 The gods take part against me, cou’d this boor

Have

Have held me thus else? I must shift for life,
Though I do loath it. [Ex. Phil. and Bel.

Coun. I cannot follow the rogue.

Enter Pharamond, Dion, Cleremont, Thrafiline, and
Woodmen.

Pha. What art thou?

Coun. Almost kill'd I am for a foolish woman; a knave
would have hurt her.

Pha. The princess, gentlemen!

Dion. 'Tis above wonder! Who should dare do this?

Pha. Speak, villain, who would have hurt the Prin-

Coun. Is it the Princess? [cess?

Dion. Ay.

Coun. Then I have seen something yet.

Pha. But who would have hurt her?

Coun. I told you, a rogue; I ne'er saw him before, I.

Pha. Madam, who was it?

Are. Some dishonest wretch;

Alas! I know him not, and do forgive him.

Coun. He's hurt himself, and soundly too, he can-
not go far; I made my father's old fox fly about his ears.

Pha. How will you have me kill him?

Are. Not at all,

'Tis some distracted fellow.

If you do take him, bring him quick to me,

And I will study for a punishment,

Great as his fault.

Pha. I will.

Are. But swear.

Pha. By all my love, I will:

Woodmen, conduct the Princess to the King,

And bear that wounded fellow unto dressing:

Come, gentlemen, we'll follow the chace close.

[Ex. Are. Pha. Dion. Cle. Thra. and '1 Woodman.]

Coun. I pray you, friend, let me see the King.

2 Wood. That you shall, and receive thanks.

Coun. If I get clear of this, I'll go see no more gay
fights. [Excunt.

SCENE, another Part of the Wood.

Enter Bellario, with a scarf.

Bel. Yes, I am hurt; and would to heav'n it were
A death's wound to me! I am faint and weak

With-

With loss of blood : my spirits ebb a-pace :
 A heaviness near death sits on my brow,
 And I must sleep : bear me, thou gentle bank,
 For ever, if thou wilt ; you sweet ones all,
 Let me unworthy press you : I cou'd wish,
 I rather were a corse strew'd over with you,
 Than quick above you. ' Dulness shuts mine eyes,
 ' And I am giddy.' Oh ! that I could take
 So sound a sleep, that I might never wake.

Enter Philaster.

Pbi. I have done ill ; my conscience calls me false.
 What strike at her, that would not strike at me !
 When I did fight, methought, I heard her pray
 The gods to guard me. She may be abus'd,
 And I a loathed villain. If she be,
 She'll not discover me ; the slave has wounds,
 And cannot follow, neither knows he me.
 Who's this ? Bellario sleeping ! If thou beest
 Guilty, there is no justice that thy sleep
 Should be so sound ; and mine, whom thou hast wrong'd,
 So broken.

Bel. Who is there ? My Lord Philaster !

[A cry within.]

Hark ! You are pursu'd ; fly, fly my Lord ! and save
 Yourself.

Pbi. How's this ! would'st thou I should be safe ?

Bel. Else were it vain for me to live. Oh, seize,
 My Lord, this offer'd means of your escape !
 The Princess, I am sure, will ne'er reveal you ;
 They have no mark to know you, but your wounds ;
 I, coming in betwixt the boor and you,
 Was wounded too. To stay the loss of blood
 I did bind on this scarf, which thus
 I tear away. Fly ! and 'twill be believed
 'Twas I assail'd the Princess.

Pbi. O heavens !

What hast thou done ? Art thou then true to me ?

Bel. Or let me perish loath'd ! Come, my good Lord,
 Creep in amongst those bushes. Who does know,
 But that the gods may save your much-lov'd breath ?

Pbi. Oh, I shall die for grief ! What wilt thou do ?

Bel. Shift for myself well : peace, I hear 'em come !

Within.

Within. Follow, follow, follow; that way they went.

Bel. With my own wounds I'll bloody my own sword!
I need not counterfeit to fall; heav'n knows
That I can stand no longer.

Enter Pharamond, Dion, Cleremont, Thrafiline, &c.

Pba. To this place we have track'd him by his blood.

Cle. Yonder, my Lord, creeps one away.

Dion. Stay, Sir, what are you?

Bel. A wretched creature wounded in these woods
By beasts! relieve me, if your names be men,
Or I shall perish!

Dion. This is he, my Lord,
Upon my soul, assail'd her; 'tis the boy,
That wicked boy, that serv'd her.

Pba. Oh, thou wretch!
What cause could'st thou shape
To hurt the Princess?

Bel. Then I am betray'd.

Dion. Betray'd! no, apprehended.

Bel. I confess,
Urge it no more, that, big with evil thoughts,
I set upon her, and did make my aim
Her death. For charity, let fall at once
The punishment you mean, and do not load
This weary flesh with tortures!

Pba. I will know
Who hir'd thee to this deed.

Bel. My own revenge,

Pba. Revenge, for what?

Bel. It pleas'd her to receive
Me as her page, and, when my fortunes ebb'd,
That men strid o'er them careless, she did shower
Her welcome graces on me, and did swell
My fortunes, till they overflow'd their banks,
'Threat'ning the men that crost 'em; when, as swift
As storms arise at sea, she turn'd her eyes
To burning furs upon me, and did dry
The streams she had bestow'd, leaving me worse,
And more contemn'd than other little brooks,
Because I had been great. In short, I knew

I could not live, and therefore did desire
To die reveng'd.

Pha. If tortures can be found,
Long as thy natural life, prepare to feel
The utmost rigour.

Cle. Help to lead him hence.

Philaster comes forth.

Phi. Turn back, you ravishers of innocence!
Know ye the price of that you bear away
So rudely?

Pha. Who's that?

Dion. 'Tis the Lord Philaster.

Phi. 'Tis not the treasure of all kings in one,
The wealth of Tagus, nor the rocks of pearl
That pave the court of Neptune, can weigh down
That virtue. It was I assail'd the Princess.
Place me, some god, upon a pyramid,
Higher than hills of earth, and lend a voice
Loud as your thunder to me, that from thence
I may discourse to all the under-world
The worth that dwells in him!

Pha. How's this?

Bel. My Lord, some man
Weary of life, that would be glad to die.

Phi. Leave these untimely courtesies, Bellario.

Bel. Alas! he's mad; come, will you lead me on?

Phi. By all the oaths that men ought most to keep,
And gods do punish most, when men do break,
He touch'd her not. Take heed, Bellario,
How thou dost drown the virtues thou hast shown,
With perjury. By all that's good, 'twas I;
You know, she stood betwixt me and my right.

Pha. Thy own tongue be thy judge.

Cle. It was Philaster.

Dion. Is't not a brave boy?

Well, Sirs, I fear me, we are all deceiv'd.

Phi. Have I no friend here?

Dion. Yes.

Phi. Then shew it; some
Good body lend a hand to draw us nearer.
Would you have tears shed for you when you die?
Then lay me gently on his neck, that there

I may weep floods, [*They lead him to Bellario*] and breathe
out my spirit;

'Tis not the wealth of Plutus, nor the gold
Lock'd in the heart of earth, can buy away
This arm-full from me. You hard-hearted men,
More stony than these mountains, can you see
Such clear pure blood drop, and not cut your flesh
To stop his life? To bind whose bitter wounds,
Queens ought to tear their hair, and with their tears
Bathe them. Forgive me, thou that art the wealth
Of poor Philaster!

Enter King, Arethusa, and a Guard.

King. Is the villain ta'en?

Pha. Sir, here be two confess the deed; but say it was
Philaster.

Phi. Question it no more, it was.

King. The fellow that did fight with him, will tell us.

Are. Ah, me! I know he will.

King. Did not you know him?

Are. No, Sir; if it was he, he was disguised.

Phi. I was so. Oh, my stars! that I should live still;

King. Thou ambitious fool!

Thou, that hast laid a train for thy own life;

'Now I do mean to do, I'll leave to talk.'

Bear him to prison.

Are. Sir, they did plot together to take hence

This harmless life; should it pass unreveng'd,

I should to earth go weeping: grant me then

(By all the love a father bears his child)

The custody of both, and to appoint

Their tortures and their death.

King. 'Tis granted: take them to you, with a guard,

Come, princely Pharamond, this business past,

We may with more security go on

To your intended match.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

Enter Philaster, Arethusa, and Bellario.

ARETHUSA.

NAY, dear Philaster, grieve not! we are well!

Bel. Nay, good my Lord, forbear; we are wondrous well.

Phi. Oh, Arethusa! Oh, Bellario! leave to be kind:

I shall be shot from heav'n, as now from earth,

If you continue so. I am a man,

Falsè to a pair of the most trusty ones

That ever earth bore. Can it bear us all?

Forgive, and leave me! but the King hath sent

To call me to my death: Oh, shew it me,

And then forget me. And for thee, my boy,

I shall deliver words will mollify

The hearts of beasts, to spare thy innocence.

Bel. Alas, my Lord, my life is not a thing

Worthy your noble thoughts; 'tis not a life,

'Tis but a piece of childhood thrown away:

Should I outlive you, I should then outlive

Virtue and honour; and, when that day comes,

If ever I shall close these eyes but once,

May I live spotted for my perjury,

And waste my limbs to nothing!

Are. And I (the woful'st mind that ever was,
Forc'd with my hands to bring my Lord to death)

Do by the honour of a virgin swear,

To tell no hours beyond it.

Phi. Make me not hated so.

People will tear me, when they find you true

To such a wretch as I; I shall die loath'd.

Enjoy your kingdoms peaceably, whilst I

For ever sleep forgotten with my faults,

Ev'ry just servant, ev'ry maid in love,

Will have a piece of me, if you be true.

Are. My dear Lord, say not so.

Bel. A piece of you!

He was not born of woman, that can cut

It and look on.

- ' *Pbi.* Take me in tears betwixt you ;
 ' For else my heart will break with shame and sorrow.
 ' *Are.* Why, 'tis well.
 ' *Bel.* Lament no more.
 ' *Pbi.* What would you have done
 ' If you had wrong'd me basely, and had found
 ' My life no price, compar'd to yours ? For love, Sirs,
 ' Deal with me plainly.
 ' *Bel.* 'Twas mistaken, Sir.
 ' *Pbi.* Why, if it were ?
 ' *Bel.* Then, Sir, we would have ask'd your pardon,
 ' *Pbi.* And have hope to enjoy it ?
 ' *Are.* Enjoy it ! ay.
 ' *Pbi.* Would you, indeed ? be plain.
 ' *Bel.* We would, my Lord.
 ' *Pbi.* Forgive me then.
 ' *Are.* So, so.
 ' *Bel.* 'Tis as it should be now.
 ' *Pbi.* Lead to my death.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE, *the Presence Chamber.**Enter King, Dion, Cleremont, and Thrasiline.**King.* Gentlemen, who saw the Prince ?

Cle. So please you, Sir, he's gone to see the city,
 And the new platform, with some gentlemen
 Attending on him.

King. Is the Princess ready
 To bring her prisoner out ?

Thra. She waits your grace.*King.* Tell her we stay.*Enter a Messenger.**Mes.* Where's the King ?*King.* Here.

Mes. To your strength, O King,
 And rescue the prince Pharamond from danger ;
 He's taken prisoner by the citizens,
 Fearing the Lord Philaster.

Enter another Messenger.

' *Mes.* Arm, arm, O King, the city is in mutiny,
 ' Led by an old grey ruffian, who comes on
 ' In rescue of the lord Philaster.

[*Exit.*]*King.* Away to th' citadel ; I'll see them safe,

And then eope with these burghers : let the guard
And all the gentlemen give strong attendance. [Exit.

Cle. The city up ! This was above our wishes.

Dion. Well, my dear countrymen, if you continue,
and fall not back upon the first broken shin, I'll have you
chronicled, and chronicled, and cut and chronicled, and
sung in all-to-be-praised sonnets, and graved in new brave
ballads, that all tongues shall trouble you *in sæcula sæculo-*
rum, my kind can-carriers.

Thra. What if a toy take them i'th' heels now, and
they all run away, and cry, the devil take the hind-
most ?

Dion. Then the same devil take the foremost too, and
souce him for his breakfast ! ' If they all prove cowards,
' my curses fly among them and be speeding ! May they
' have murrains reign to keep the gentlemen at home,
' unbound in easy freeze ! May the moths branch their
' velvets ! May their false lights undo them, and discover
' presses, holes, stains, and oldness in their stuffs, and
' make them shop-rid !' May they keep whores and
horses, and break ; and live mewed up with necks of
beef and turnips ! May they have many children, and
none like the father ! May they know no language but
that gibberish they prattle to their parcels, unless it be
the Gothic Latin they write in their bonds, and may
they write that false, and lose their debts !

Enter the King.

King. 'Tis Philaster,
None but Philaster, must allay this heat ;
They will not hear me speak ; but call me tyrant.
My daughter and Bellario too declare,
Were he to die, that they would both die with him.
Oh, run, dear friend, and bring the lord Philaster ;
Speak him fair ; call him prince ; do him all
The courtesy you can ; commend me to him.
I have already given orders for his liberty.

Cle. My Lord, he's here.

Enter Philaster.

King. Oh, worthy Sir, forgive me ; ' do not make
' Your miseries and my faults meet together,
' To bring a greater danger. Be yourself,
' Still found amongst diseases.' I have wrong'd you,
' And

‘ And though I find it last, and beaten to it,
 ‘ Let first your goodness know it.’ Calm the people,
 And be what you were born to: take your love,
 And with her my repentance, ‘ and my wishes,
 ‘ And all my pray’rs:’ by th’ gods, my heart speaks this:
 And if the least fall from me not perform’d,
 May I be struck with thunder.

Pbi. Mighty Sir,

I will not do your greatness so much wrong,
 As not to make your word truth; free the Princess
 And the poor boy, and let me stand the shock
 Of this mad sea-breach, which I’ll either turn
 Or perish with it.

King. Let your own word free them.

Pbi. Then thus I take my leave, kissing your hand,
 And hanging on your royal word: be kingly,
 And be not mov’d, Sir; I shall bring you peace,
 Or never bring myself back.

King. All the gods go with thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *a Street in the City.*

Enter an old Captain and Citizens with Pharamond.

Cap. Come, my brave myrmidons, let us fall on,
 Let our caps swarm, my boys,
 And your nimble tongues forget your mothers’
 Gibberish; of what do you lack, and set your mouths
 Up, children, till your pallats fall frighted half a
 Fathom, past the cure of bay-salt and gross pepper,
 And then cry Philaster, brave Philaster.

All. Philaster! Philaster!

Cap. How do you like this, my Lord Prince?

Pbi. I hear it with disdain, unterrified;
 Yet sure humanity has not forsook you;
 You will not see me massacred, thus coolly butcher’d by
 numbers?

Enter Philaster.

All. Long live Philaster, the brave prince Philaster

Pbi. I thank you, gentlemen; but why are these
 Rude weapons brought abroad, to teach your hands
 Uncivil trades?

Cap. My royal Rosiclear,
 We are thy myrmidons, thy guard, thy roarers;

And when thy noble body is in duraunce,
 Thus we do clap our musty murrions on,
 And trace the streets in terror. Is it peace,
 'Thou Mars of men? Is the king sociable,
 And bids thee live? Art thou above thy foemen,
 And free as Phœbus? Speak; if not, this stand
 Of royal blood shall be abroach, a-tilr, and run
 Even to the lees of honour.

Phi. Hold and be satisfied; I am myself,
 Free as my thoughts are; by the gods, I am.

Cap. Art thou the dainty darling of the king?
 Art thou the Hylas to our Hercules?
 Is the court navigable, and the presence stuck
 With flags of friendship? If not, we are thy castle,
 And this man sleeps.

Phi. I am what I desire to be, your friend;
 I am what I was born to be, your prince.

Pha. Sir, there is some humanity in you;
 You have a noble soul; forget my name,
 And know my misery; set me safe aboard
 From these wild Canibals, and, as I live,
 I'll quit this land for ever.

Phi. I do pity you: friends, discharge your fears;
 Deliver me the Prince.

Good, my friends, go to your houses, and by me have
 Your pardons, and my love;
 And know, there shall be nothing in my pow'r
 You may deserve, but you shall have your wishes.

All. Long mayst thou live, brave Prince!
 Brave Prince! brave Prince! [*Exeunt Phi. and Pha.*]

Cap. Go thy ways; thou art the king of courtesy:
 fall off again, my sweet youths; come, and every man
 trace to his house again, and hang his pewter up; then
 to the tavern, and bring your wives in muffs: we will
 have music, and the red grape shall make us dance, and
 rise, boys. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to the Court.*

Enter King, Arethusa, Galatea, Megra, Cleremont,
Dion, Thrafiline, Bellario, and *Attendants.*

King. Is it appeas'd?

Dion. Sir, all is quiet as the dead of night,
As peaceable as sleep. My lord Philaster
Brings on the Prince himself.

King. Kind gentleman!
I will not break the least word I have giv'n
In promise to him. I have heap'd a world
Of grief upon his head, which yet I hope
To wash away.

Enter Philaster and Pharamond.

Cle. My Lord is come.

King. My son!

Blest be the time, that I have leave to call
Such virtue mine! 'Now thou art in mine arms,
'Methinks I have a salve unto my breast
'For all the stings that dwell there:' streams of grief
That I have wrong'd thee, and as much of joy
That I repent it, issue from mine eyes:
Let them appease thee; take thy right; take her,
She is thy right too, and forget to urge
My vexed soul with that I did before.

Phi. Sir, it is blotted from my memory,
Past and forgotten: for you, prince of Spain,
Whom I have thus redeem'd, you have full leave
To make an honourable voyage home.
And if you would go furnish'd to your realm
With fair provision, I do see a lady,
Methinks, would gladly bear you company.

Meg. Shall I then alone
Be made the mark of obloquy and scorn?
Can shame remain perpetually in me,
And not in others? Or have princes salves
'To cure ill names, that meaner people want?

Phi. What mean you?

Meg. You must get another ship
To bear the Princess and the boy together.

Dion. How now!

Meg. I have already published both their shames.

Ship

‘ Ship us all four, my Lord ; we can endure
 ‘ Weather and wind alike.’

King. Clear thou thyself, or know not me for father.

Are. This earth, how false it is ! What means is left
 For me to clear myself ? It lies in your belief.
 My Lord ; believe me, and let all things else
 Struggle together to dishonour me.

Bel. Oh, stop your ears, great King, that I may speak
 As freedom would : then I will call this lady
 As base as be her actions. Hear me, Sir ;
 Believe your heated blood when it rebels
 Against your reason, sooner than this lady.

Pbi. This lady ! I will sooner trust the wind
 With feathers, or the troubled sea with pearl,
 Than her with any thing : believe her not !
 Why, think you, if I did believe her words,
 I would outlive them ? Honour cannot take
 Revenge on you ; then what were to be known
 But death ?

King. Forget her, Sir, since all is knit
 Between us : but I must request of you
 One favour, and will sadly not be denied.

Pbi. Command, whate’er it be.

King. Swear to be true
 To what you promise.

Pbi. By the l’ow’rs above,
 Let it not be the death of her or him,
 And it is granted.

King. Bear away the boy
 To torture. I will have her clear’d or buried.

Pbi. Oh, let me call my words back, worthy Sir ;
 Ask something else : bury my life and right
 In one poor grave ; but do not take away
 My life and fame at once.

King. Away with him, it stands irrevocable.

Bel. Oh, kill me, gentlemen !

‘ *Dion.* No, help, Sirs.’

Bel. Will you torture me ?

King. Hasten there ; why stay you ?

Bel. Then I shall not break my vow,
 You know, just gods, though I discover all.

King. How’s that ? Will he confess ?

Dion. Sir, so he says.

King. Speak then.

Bel. Great king, if you command
This lord to talk with me alone, my tongue,
Urg'd by my heart, shall utter all the thoughts
My youth hath known, and stranger things than these
You hear not often.

King. Walk aside with him.

[*Dion and Bel. walk aside together.*]

Dion. Why speak'st thou not ?

Bel. Know you this face, my Lord ?

Dion. No.

Bel. Have you not seen it, nor the like ?

Dion. Yes, I have seen the like, but readily
I know not where.

Bel. I have been often told
In court, of one Euphrasia, a lady,
And daughter to you ; betwixt whom and me,
They, that would flatter my bad face, would swear
There was such strange resemblance, that we two
Could not be known asunder, drest alike.

Dion. By Heav'n, and so there is.

Bel. For her fair sake,
Who now doth spend the spring-time of her life
In holy pilgrimage, move to the King,
That I may 'scape this torture.

Dion. But thou speak'st
As like Euphrasia, as thou dost look.
How came it to thy knowledge that she lives
In pilgrimage ?

Bel. I know it not, my Lord.
But I have heard it, yet do scarce believe it.

Dion. Oh, my shame, is it possible ? Draw near,
That I may gaze upon thee : art thou she ?
' Or else her murderer ?' Where wert thou born ?

Bel. In Siracusa.

Dion. What's thy name ?

Bel. Euphrasia.

Dion. 'Tis just ; 'tis she ; now I do know thee ; Oh,
That thou hadst died, and I had never seen
Thee nor my shame.

Bel. Would I had died, indeed ! I wish it too ;

And

And so I must have done by vow, ere published
 What I have told ; but that there was no means
 To hide it longer ; yet I joy in this,
 The Princess is all clear.

King. What have you done?

Dion. All is discover'd.

Are. What is discover'd ?

Dion. Why, my shame ;

It is a woman ; let her speak the rest.

Phi. How ! that again.

Dion. It is a woman.

Phi. Blest be you pow'rs that favour innocence !

It is a woman, Sir ! hark, gentlemen !

It is a woman. Arethusa, take

My soul into thy breast, that would be gone

With joy ; it is a woman—thou art fair,

And virtuous still to ages, 'spight of malice.

King. Speak you ; where lies his shame ?

Bel. I am his daughter.

Phi. The gods are just.

But, Bellario,

(For I must call thee still so) tell me, why

Thou didst conceal thy sex ; it was a fault ;

A fault, Bellario, though thy other deeds

Of truth outweigh'd it : all these jealousies

Had flown to nothing, if thou hadst discover'd,

What now we know.

Bel. My father oft would speak

Your worth and virtue, and as I did grow

More and more apprehensive, I did thirst

To see the man so prais'd ; but yet all this

Was but a maiden-longing, to be lost

As soon as found ; till sitting in my window,

Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a god

I thought (but it was you) enter our gates ;

My blood flew out, and back again as fast,

As I had puff'd it forth and suck'd it in

Like breath ; then was I call'd away in haste

To entertain you. Never was a man,

Heav'd from a sheep-cote to a scepter, rais'd

So high in thoughts as I ; you left a kiss

Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep

From you for ever ; I did hear you talk,
 Far above singing ; after you were gone,
 I grew acquainted with my heart, and search'd
 What stirr'd it so : alas ! I found it love ;
 Yet far from ill, for could I have but liv'd
 In presence of you, I had had my end ;
 For this I did delude my noble father
 With a feign'd pilgrimage, and dress'd myself
 In habit of a boy ; and, for I knew
 My birth no match for you, I was past hope
 Of having you : and understanding well
 That when I made discovery of my sex,
 I could not stay with you ; I made a vow,
 By all the most religious things a maid
 Could call together, never to be known,
 Whilst there was hope to hide me from mens' eyes,
 For other than I seem'd, that I might ever
 Abide with you ; then sat I by the fount,
 Where first you took me up.

King. Search out a match
 Within our kingdom, where and when thou wilt,
 And I will pay thy dowry ; and thyself
 Wilt well deserve him.

Bel. Never, Sir, will I
 Marry ; it is a thing within my vow.

Pbi. I grieve, such virtues should be laid in earth
 Without an heir. Hear me, my royal father,
 Wrong not the freedom of our souls so much,
 To think to take revenge of that base woman ;
 Her malice cannot hurt us ; set her free
 As she was born, saving from shame and sin.

King. Well ! Be it so. You, Pharamond,
 Shall have free passage, and a conduct home
 Worthy so great a prince ; when you come there,
 Remember, 'twas your faults that lost you her,
 And not my purpos'd will.

Pba. I do confess it ;
 And let this confession
 Spread an oblivion o'er my follies past.

King. It shall—All is forgot ;
 Now join your hands in one. Enjoy, Philaster,
 This kingdom, which is yours, and after me

Whatever I call mine ; my blessing on you !
All happy hours be at your marriage-joys,
That you may grow yourselves over all lands,
And live to see your plenteous branches spring
Where-ever there is sun !——Let princes learn
By this to rule the passions of their blood ;
For, what Heav'n wills, can never be withstood.

END of the FIFTH ACT.







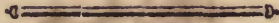
J. Roberts del.

Published for Bells British Theatre Jan 7 1778.

Thornhill sculp.

*M^{rs} YATES in the Character of VIRGINIA.
 For tho' I love, yet still I am a Roman.*

BELL'S EDITION.



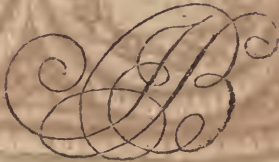
VIRGINIA.

A TRAGEDY.

As written by Mr. CRISP,

AND PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.



LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXXVIII.

THE NEW EDITION

THE HISTORY OF

THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES

THE SECOND



BY

JOHN BURNET, ESQ.

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
EARL AND COUNTESS OF COVENTRY,
THIS TRAGEDY,
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF THEIR
POWERFUL PROTECTION AND FAVOUR,
IS INSCRIBED,
BY THEIR MOST OBLIGED,
AND
MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

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THE GREAT HINDU WARRIOR

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THE GREAT HINDU WARRIOR



P R O L O G U E .

Written and spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

PROLOGUES, like compliments, are loss of time ;
'Tis penning bows, and making legs in rhyme ;
'Tis cringing at the door with sim'ring grin,
When we should shew the company within——
So thinks our bard, who, stiff in classic knowledge,
Preserves too much the buckram of the college.
Lord, Sir ! said I, an audience must be woo'd,
And, lady-like, with flattery pursu'd ;
They nauseate fellows that are blunt and rude.
Authors should learn to dance, as well as write——
Dance at my time of life ! Zounds, what a sight !
Grown gentlemen ('tis advertis'd) do learn by night.
Your modern prologues, and such whims as these,
The Greeks ne'er knew——turn, turn to Sophocles——
I read no Greek, Sir——when I was at school,
Terence had prologues ; Terence was no fool——
He had ; but why ? (reply'd the bard in rage)
Exotics, monsters, had possess'd the stage,
But we have none, in this enlighten'd age !
Your Britons now, from gallery to pit,
Can relish nought, but sterling, Attic wit.
Here, take my play, I meant it for instruction ;
If rhymes are wanting for its introduction,
E'en let that nonsense be your own production.
Off went the poet——It is now expedient,
I speak as manager, and your obedient.
I, as your cat'rer, would provide you dishes,
Dress'd to your palates, season'd to your wishes——

Say but you're tir'd with boi'd and roast at home,
 We too can send for niceties from Rome;
 To please your tastes will spare nor pains nor money,
 Discard sirloins, and get you maccaroni.
 Whate'er new gusto for a time may reign,
 Shakespeare and beef must have their turn again.

If novelties can please, to-night we've two;
 Tho' English both, yet spare them, as they're new——
 To one at least your usual favour shew;
 A female asks it, can a man say no?
 Should you indulge our * novice, yet unseen,
 And crown her with your hands a tragic queen;
 Should you with smiles a confidence impart,
 To calm those fears which speak a feeling heart;
 Assist each struggle of ingenuous shame,
 Which curbs a genius in its road to fame:
 With one wish more her whole ambition ends——
 She hopes some merit, to deserve such friends.

* A new actress.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author cannot suffer this tragedy to be published, without acknowledging the obligations he is under to Mr. Garrick, not only for his masterly performance in the representation—(that is, nothing new) and for his prologue and epilogue, which have met with universal applause, but likewise for his friendly advice, by which the play is certainly rendered much more dramatic than it was at first. By the same advice, some passages are restored in the printing, which were omitted in the representation. The reader, perhaps, may excuse this small addition to the length of the scenes; but with the spectator, brevity will atone for a number of deficiencies.

Mrs. Cibber, in particular, and the other performers, in general, should have the author's thanks, for the great justice they have done him, did not the applause of the town make any thing that he could say unnecessary.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

T H E M E M B E R S

M E N.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>
<i>Appius</i> , chief of the Decemvirs,	Mr. Moffop.
<i>L. Virginius</i> , a plebeian centurion,	Mr. Garrick.
<i>Lucius Icilius</i> , a young plebeian, late tribune of the people,	Mr. Ross.
<i>Claudius</i> , a patrician, a dependant on <i>Appius</i> ,	Mr. Davies.
<i>Rufus</i> , a plebeian, a creature of <i>Claudius</i> ,	Mr. Mozeen.
<i>Caius</i> , freedman to <i>L. Virginius</i> ,	Mr. Clough.

W O M E N.

<i>Virginia</i> , daughter to <i>L. Virginius</i> ,	Mrs. Cibber.
<i>Marcia</i> , sister to <i>Claudius</i> ,	Mrs. Graham.
<i>Plautia</i> , <i>Virginia's</i> nurse and governess,	Mrs. Bennet.

Guards, lictors, attendants, &c.

SCENE, ROME.

V I R G I N I A.

A C T I.

SCENE, *an Apartment in Claudius's House in Rome.*

Enter Claudius and Rufus.

CLAUDIUS.

RUFUS, didst mark Virginius, with what scorn
He ey'd us, as we pass'd his gates but now ?

Ruf. Old age, and frantic dreams of Rome and glory,
Have turn'd his visionary brain.

Claud. Saw'st thou
With what impetuous haste and eager looks
He issued forth ?

Ruf. What is the cause ?

Claud. A summons
Is just arriv'd, that calls him to the camp ;
A battle is expected ev'ry hour.
'Tis lucky, and will favour the design
Of our Decemvir on his beauteous daughter.

Ruf. This rash pursuit of a contracted maid,
I fear, will have some fatal end. Should Appius
Employ his pow'r—I tremble at the thought!
Virginius is ador'd throughout the tribes ;
His silver hairs, his honour, his rough eloquence,
Would fire all Rome. We must find out some way
To turn him from so desperate a course.

Claud. Impossible and vain !—His headlong passions
Mock all controul. Of that no more. I tell thee,
No choice is left, but to contrive the means
To sooth her to his arms.

Ruf. To sooth her, Claudius !
Thou know'st she is contracted ; nay, with fondness

She

She loves the people's darling, young Iolius;
 He who so bravely serv'd them as their Tribune.
 Will he be won, by arts of soft persuasion,
 To quit his graceful form, his youth and valor,
 For the lean aspect, and declining years
 Of Appian?

Clod. Hard it seems, yet not impossible;
 I ha'n't in charge to make th' attempt at least
 Without delay.

Brut. What, while the hot Cassian
 Remains in Rome?

Clod. He is let forth already
 From his own gates, and now, within few minutes,
 Will run his hack on Rome. His pride and honour
 Will spur him to the camp with fiery speed:
 There's danger there, and glory to be won.
 Th' attempt is fait, nor must we lose a moment:
 What once the hour's o'er, he will return,
 Perhaps with conquest fast'nd, and doubly arm'd
 With pow'r t' oppose us.

Brut. It can be so succeed.

Clod. Could we prevail but on our sister Marcia—
 She is Virginia's trained maid—She might
 Work glorious mischief!

Brut. Marcia! get you Marcia!
 Will he combine in such dark practices?
 The jarring elements of Rome would mix
 Their enmities!

Clod. What if herself the lov'd
 Iolius?

Brut. Howens!

Clod. If both my eyes and ears
 Deceive me not, she's deeply wounded, Brutus.

Brut. I'm assur'd o' it! Is this be so—

Clod. Ay, Brutus,
 If this be so, then where are truth and honour?
 Let vanity mount and warm passion work
 In woman's breast— I ask no more— 'Tis true,
 It sounds well, this long list of tried virtues;
 But it weighs little.

Brut. Have you try'd her yet?
 It possible—

Clod.

Claud. Some infant hints I've dropp'd;
I've talk'd of Appius' marriage with Virginia,
And blam'd the rigid edict that forbids
Patrician and plebeian blood to mix.
My purpose was to sound her; for thou know'st
Her birth is of the noblest; but fortune
Is of plebeian race.

Raf. How heath'ne this?

Claud. With silent, deep attention; but her eyes,
And her emotion, told me all within—
Methinks I hear her voice. Go, Rufus; haste
To Appius; tell him, that I go to pay
Obedience to his will; and in due form
Will let him know th' event, and wait his pleasure.

[*Exit Rufus.*]

Enter Marcia.

Mar. I came not on design to interrupt
Your earnest conference.

Claud. Marcia, so thro'
My soul knows no reserve; but longs to share
Her wishes, hopes, and fears; each ebbing thought,
Each weakness, and each want, with faithful Marcia.

Mar. Thou seem'st I doubt'd it. That brow, with care
Denotes a siner within. [*Retreated,*

Claud. Too truly guess'd it.
Tay aid I want, thy counsel. Let me tell thee
The weight that my soul labours with.

Mar. My brother,
Thy griefs are all my own; and if the world
Contain a remedy, to purchase it,
I'll give my means, my life, my all, as freely
As I give breath this air I draw.

Claud. Oh, Marcia!
Virginia—the, she is the cause!

Mar. Virginia!
My dear and generous friend.—What means my brother?
This infant I expect her—

Claud. [*Interposing her.*] What, Virginia!
Expect her here!—Oh, say!—

Mar. Shall I conceal
From Claudius' sight, I were to wrong his love—

Exit

Know then, this day Icilius secretly
Intends to enter Rome.

Claud. Heav'ns! on what cause?

Ha!—sure he has not heard—It cannot be— [*Aside*]

Mar. Th' impatience of a lover. Thro' my means;
He begs to meet the object of his wishes;
To steal a look, to breathe a sigh, no more.

Claud. But knows Virginia his intent?

Mar. She does not;

I only sent t' intreat her to pass hither.

Claud. Marcia, I do conjure thee, by the gods,
By all thou hold'st most dear, attend and hear me!
Prevent their meeting, break this fatal match,
Or Appius, stung to frenzy, will commit
Some act of desperation—Oh, 'twill save
Thy friends, thy brother, Appius, nay Virginia
And Rome itself, perhaps, from instant ruin! [*Think,*

Mar. Ah, Claudius! whither wouldst thou lead me?—
Think, what I owe to friendship and to honour.

Claud. Honour commands all private ties should yield
To public good. Wouldst thou behold our streets
Strown with the carcases of slaughter'd citizens,
And Tyber's wave run purple with their blood?
Ha, civil discord, Marcia!

Mar. Gods, cut short

My thread of life, ere that dread hour arrives!

Claud. 'Tis ev'n at hand, and, like a horrid comet,
Hangs o'er our fated heads, portending plagues,
And gen'ral desolation to mankind!

Mar. Why dost thou tempt me with these shapes of
To my perdition? I dare be unhappy, [*terror,*

Unhappy, but not base. Oh, my Virginia!

Companion of my youth! the tender band

Of amity, that link'd our infancy,

Grew with our growth, and ripen'd with our years,

Shall I now break the sacred knot with treason?

Icilius too—a friend!—What have I said?

A friend!—Ah, Marcia! would he were no more!

But, hush, my sighs! [*Aside.*] How shall I look on him,

When he shall know, that Marcia was the serpent

That stung his heart?

Claud.

Claud. Icilius? — hear me, Marcia —
If thou wouldst save Icilius from destruction,
Burst all the ties that bind him to Virginia;
By heav'n's, his very life, his being, all,
Depend on thy compliance,

Mar. Ha! — his life! —

Saidst thou his life! — be still, my trembling heart. [*Aside.*]

Claud. Disorder'd!

[*Aside.*]

Mar. Must Icilius' life then pay
The purchase of his love?

Claud. 'Tis as I wish'd —

[*Aside.*]

Can Marcia ask? — should Appius' hopes be blasted,
Think'st thou he'd e'er endure a hated rival
Should live to triumph o'er him, and possess
The prize he lost? — To pierce Icilius' heart,
And glut his fierce revenge, Appius would wade
Thro' seas of blood!

Mar. Look down, ye pitying gods,
Or I am lost!

[*Aside.*]

Claud. Dislodge this fatal image,
That fills Virginia's breast; make room for Appius;
Trust me the time will come, when ev'n Icilius
Shall thank thy care, and bless the hand that sav'd him.
A more auspicious love shall crown his wishes,
And kinder stars shall reign!

Mar. I dare not, cannot —

Claud. Enough — thou hast decreed Icilius' fall,
And all must go to wreck.

[*Going.*]

Mar. Distract me not! —

Oh, stay! — tho' I should try to plead for Appius,
What could I hope? — Repulse, reproach, and shame
At once would dash th' attempt —

Claud. To plead for Appius! —

Feeble and vain! — Thou must sow discord, Marcia,
Between the lovers; Appius then may prosper.

Mar. Most foul, and horrid!

Claud. 'Tis a righteous fraud

To cheat 'em into safety — but no more —
Heav'n points the only way to peace and bliss;
If thou wilt not pursue it, take th' event.

Mar. Oh, love! Oh, virtue! how ye tear this heart! [*Aside.*]
Means Appius nobly? Does he purpose marriage,
And holy rites?

Claud. 'Tis his soul's utmost wish
To call Virginia his, and by a claim,
The proudest blood of Rome might glory in.

Enter a Slave.

Slave. The daughter of Virginius is arriv'd,
And entering now the gates. [*Exit Slave.*]

Claud. Now, Marcia, hear me.
Let me go forth to meet her, let me seize
The blest occasion, and in softest terms
Sooth her young bosom with th' illustrious conquest
Her charms have made—I'll tell her thou art absent—
Soon to return—— She must not see Icilius——
Beware of that——leave me to plead for Appius——
I'll blazon out the purity and ardor
Of his bright flame, his dignity, and merit;
I'll warm with love, or dazzle with ambition,
Her heart, if it be cast in woman's mould:
Marcia, farewell! Be constant, and remember,
Thy friends, thy country, all, demand this service!

[*Exit Claudius.*]

Mar. Thy country and thy friends demand this ser-
vice, me!—he little thinks what passes here! [*vice—*]

[*Striking her breast.*]

What conflicts!—what despair!—He little knows
The busy, secret spring, that heaves unseen
Within this beating breast, and drives me on
To do a deed!—Relentless, cruel love!
What ravage hast thou made within this bosom!
Which nature fashion'd in her softest mould,
And fitted it for truth and gentle pity!
But thou hast ruin'd all!—Thou hast let in
The furies, and their horrid train upon me!
Thou hast undone poor Marcia!—Oh, Icilius!
Why did I ever see thy fatal form!
Why didst thou chuse me out to be thy friend,
And tell to me the story of thy love,
Warm from the heart!—the flame infected me!
And can I see thee bleed?—Oh, love and fortune,
Guard the dear youth!—Reserve your sharpest bolts
For me!—Witness, ye gods, I am content
To be a wretch——But bless, Oh, bless Icilius!

[*Exit Mar.*]

SCENE,

SCENE, *The Forum.**Enter L. Virginius and Caius.**L. Vir.* Say'st thou Horatius is set free?*Caius.* This morn,By an exprefs command from the Decemvirs,
The Licitors have releas'd him.*L. Vir.* Then 'tis well——

I but delay'd my march till he was safe——

But by the gods, this outrage touches nearly,

And calls for quick redress — Our fenators

Thus wrong'd for rifing in the caufe of liberty!——

Valerius filenc'd, and the brave Horatius

Condemn'd to bonds and death!

Caius. 'Tis now pretended,

The earnest interceffion of the fenate

Hardly obtain'd this boon.

L. Vir. Mean, shallow art!

If he is freed, their fears, and not their mercy,

Have loos'd his chains! Their dreaded pow'r now shakes!

They feel it too—Last night th'incens'd plebeians,

Gathering in desperate throngs around the fenate,

With their repeated clamours scar'd the colour

From their pale cheeks, till on their feat of judgment

They trembled, Caius! Nay their hundred licitors—

But fee, where Appius comes, their chief——

Caius. Virginius,

Retire—tempt not his rage—Your noble friend

Is safe—The camp demands your fervice now——

Avoid his fight: nor with your prefence rouze

The fmother'd flames of difcord.

L. Vir. Shall I fly

From Appius?—Here I'll ftay and dare his worft!

And if his brutal pride provoke my anger,

I fwear, ev'n from the fulnefs of my heart

I'll pour it on him!

Caius. Yet be calm ——*L. Vir.* No more——

When bold oppreffion ftalks, let come what may,

Honour and age fhall hold their courfe——

[*Exit Caius.*

Enter Appius.

Ap. Virginius,
Your friend yet lives; the senate have prevail'd;
And their united pray'rs at length have sav'd him
From the Tarpeian rock——Advise him well
To curb his insolence——Let him beware
How he again affronts the sovereign pow'r
With that seditious tongue, unless he means
To pay the forfeit with his life.

L. Vir. 'Tis well——
'Th' imperial stile of kings and Tarquin's reign
Seem now return'd; and we must learn to tremble;
When Appius thunders!

Ap. Think'st thou the Decemvirate,
In whom the majesty of Rome resides,
So weak in strength or counsel, that each citizen
Commission'd by his pride, shall dare unquestion'd
To arraign their power and office, give a loose
To his invective rage, and brave his masters?
But say, Virginius, why art thou a foe?
Thou hast not felt the weight of sov'reign power,
Thy family, tho' of plebeian rank,
Rever'd, and honour'd; favour and distinction,
Have still pursu'd thy steps, and grac'd thy virtues;
Why then such spleen to the Decemvirate?
Why so much care to foster and support
Th' unruly tribes?

L. Vir. Because I love mankind;
And therefore am an enemy to tyrants.

Ap. Call'st thou these clods mankind? things made for
To be impell'd or check'd, goaded or curb'd, [use,
As higher spirits direct?

L. Vir. It seems then, Appius,
The Roman people are mere flocks and herds,
Permitted for a while to graze and fatten,
Then to be sheec'd, or slaughter'd at thy will.

Ap. Not all, Virginius—some must draw the yoke,
And carry burdens.

L. Vir. Insolent usurper!
Dar'st thou to triumph in a nation's sorrows?
Nay revel o'er her ruins? Righteous gods!

Brought

Brought ye your boasted laws from Greece, to trample
On those of nature and your groaning country?

Ap. By heav'ns, thou mov'st my laughter more than
Want ye your Consuls, your seditious Tribunes, [wrath!
To drive th' ungovern'd herd at your own list?
For this, ye seek the rabble, make harangues,
Complain of wrongs, and speech it in the Forum.

L. Vir. Foe to thy country! What's that impious power,
Which the Decemvirate abuse so grossly,
First gain'd by fraud, now held by violence?
Is't not mere sacrilege, and usurpation?
With all the fatal arts of dark ambition,
Did ye not practise on the tribes, to pave
Your way to empire? Nay, thou haughty tyrant,
Their chief, whose fierce and barb'rous pride was wont
To spurn the commons, quickly learn'dst to smooth
That rugged brow, and court the dregs of Rome!
The populace thus moulded to your purpose,
Ye threw aside the mask, and with bold robbery,
Seiz'd sov'reign power!

Ap. Ay, and will hold it too,
In spite of thee, Valerius and Horatius!

L. Vir. Valerius and Horatius once were names
Fatal to tyrants! Their great ancestors
Once join'd their virtues 'gainst the haughty Tarquins,
Together sluic'd their veins in honour's cause,
And purchas'd immortality!—Will these,
Who wear their father's names, forget their glories?
No, proud Decemvir; thou shalt find their spirits
Live in their sons! Some sparks of liberty,
In Roman breasts; tho' faint, yet still alive,
Blown by their breaths, may kindle to a flame:
The gen'rous fire shall catch from soul to soul,
O'erbear all opposition, blast our foes,
Purge off the foul infection we've contracted,
And melt this drossy age, to purest gold!

Ap. Why then, the fate of the Decemvirate
Is fixt, it seems, and here their pow'r must end;
For so the great Virginus has decreed!

L. Vir. Thou triumph'st, tyrant!—but the time will
(Perhaps is not far off) when thy misdeeds, [come,
Accumulated, ripe for punishment,

Shall burst upon thy head, wake slumb'ring vengeance,
 And justify the gods!—Rome feels at length
 Thy galling chain, and pants to shake it off;
 The mist, that popular favour threw around thee,
 Is vanish'd, and she sees thee as thou art!
 Cover'd with crimes!—Fraud, rapine, perjury!
 Now starts to light the murder of brave Siccus,
 And thy base hand red with his patriot blood!

Ap. Confusion!—

L. Vir. Ha, Decemvir!—does it sting thee?
 With murder lust is coupled! thy fell bosom
 No pity knows!—The cries of innocence,
 The lover's groans, the pangs of husbands, parents,
 Are but as goads to spur thy brutal appetite!
 But think not yet our spirits are so tam'd,
 So broke by constant wrongs—With instant march,
 I'll join the camp—the gallant bands shall know,
 While they drop blood for Rome, what chains are forging
 To fetter those victorious hands that sav'd
 Their country!—yes, Decemvir!—and 'ere long
 Expect their thanks!—

[*Exit L. Virginius.*]

Ap. By heav'n's, thou hast awak'd,
 A fire that shall consume thee!—Have I tam'd
 The fiercest spirits in Rome, quell'd the proud senate,
 And bent their necks beneath my yoke, to shrink,
 When a grey-headed ruffian storms—Shalt thou
 Controll my will?—Thy daughter, proud plebeian,
 Shall quit thy insolence! Appius from her
 Shall seek redress, and on her panting bosom,
 Receive the dear amends!

Enter Claudius.

Ap. Now, Claudius, now—
 What bring'st thou from the lovely fair?

Claud. Repulse—

Reproach, despair—nay scarce her fears suppress'd
 Her rising scorn—Icilius reigns unrivall'd
 Within her breast, nor is there room for Appius.

Ap. Shall Appius then at last become the scoff
 Of a plebeian girl?—That haughty Appius,
 Who with a nod has taught the state to tremble?
 No—by the gods she's mine!—

Claud. Consider, Appius—

Ap. Away——she shall be mine——her fate's decreed—
 I check'd my impetuous wishes, 'till her father
 Had turn'd his back on Rome, nay, bore his insolence
 Till I e'en burst with rage——Then, but I mark'd
 His daughter for my prey, I'd like a tyger
 Leap'd at his throat!——But now, my boiling blood
 No more can brook restraint——I am repuls'd,
 And vengeance shall have way!——I will possess her,
 Tho' all Rome sink to lowest Tartarus,
 And drag me headlong with her cumb'rous ruins!

Claud. Is this the hero, whose superior greatness
 Has won an empire?

Ap. Claudius, I am mad!—
 I'm on the rack!—My soul, with all her functions,
 Chain'd down and prison'd, that she cannot stir
 To shake her heavy load off, and escape
 From this devouring fire!

Claud. Now, gods above
 Whom we adore, what spell has chang'd thee thus?
 And backward turn'd the course of thy strong nature,
 Inflexible till now?—Severe, unmov'd,
 Defying love's sweet pow'rs, and all his train
 Of gentle sighs and wishes!

Ap. Wouldst thou have me
 Tell o'er the tale of my dishonour?——Dwell on
 Each point and circumstance of my defeat,
 And parcel out my shame?——Thou shalt be satisfy'd,
 If the hot blood, that rises to my cheeks,
 Choak not all utterance.——One fatal morn,
 As I was seated on my throne of judgment,
 In th' open Forum, the attendant crowd
 Awaiting my decrees, my eyes were struck
 With a young damsel that pass'd slowly by me,
 Attended only by one female slave.
 Oh, Venus, what a grace!—What heavenly sweetness!
 What looks!—On th' instant, troubled and disorder'd,
 Trembling all o'er, I felt a pain unusual,
 Yet mix'd with strange delight, shoot nimbly thro' me,
 And thrill in ev'ry vein!—Quite fixt and motionless
 Some time I sat, nor heard the noisy orator
 Haranguing long and loud!——My senses all
 Seal'd up, except these eyes, which still pursu'd her:

When

VIRGINIA.

When suddenly I rose from my tribunal,
Dismiss'd the crowd, and gath'ring up my robe
In haste, I followed her.

Claud. Great Hercules!

Couldst thou see this? —

Ap. Before I quite had reach'd her,
She enter'd, with her slave, the public schools,
By custom destin'd to our Roman maids;
Here suddenly I stopp'd — here I stood rooted —
My eyes devouring her! —

Claud. Ye powers of love,
Who shall henceforth oppose your boundless sway?

Ap. Thus I remain'd entranc'd; and at my eyes
Drank in her beauties, and with them deep draughts
Of poison, how delicious! — If she mov'd,
What grace! — Or if she mingled in the dance
Among the blooming virgins, Dian's self,
Amidst her woodland nymphs she seem'd! — At length,
The exercises o'er, a lyre she took,
A deep-strung lyre, and to harmonious chords
Pour'd out such melting strains, as would have staid
Th' uplifted arm of angry Jove, in act
To deal his thunder on a guilty world!

Claud. In what bright forms a raptur'd lover's fancy
Paints the all-perfect fair one? — But proceed!
What follow'd this?

Ap. At last, the sports being ended,
She issued forth — When strait the eyes of all
Were turn'd on her alone — Surpris'd, abash'd.
Her lovely face o'erspread with rosy blushes,
That witness'd sweet confusion, she let drop
Her veil, and homeward mov'd with decent pace,
Timid and silent! — Ever since that day,
That fatal day, my soul has known no rest!
The venom'd shaft still rankles in my bosom:
Still, as I pass that way, I stop and gaze! —
A monstrous sight! — Rome's awful magistrate
A laughter to the people!

Claud. This fond passion,

I see has taken root, — But say, great Appius,
Couldst thou, inspir'd with love so delicate,
For such a charming maid, so soft, so perfect,

Couldst

Couldst thou use force?—What!—lock thy furious hand
 In her torn hair, and drag her, shrieking loud,
 Invoking heav'n and earth, and cursing thee!
 Injure, perhaps, and wound with thy abuses.
 Her polish'd limbs!—By violence tear from her
 Joys of a moment, insincere, unripe,
 Not half possess'd!

Ap. Oh! Claudius, I will own to thee, with blushes,
 This untam'd heart is melted to the softness
 Of a fond, lovesick maid!—Fain would I win
 Her gentle soul, possess her pure affections!
 But, Oh, in vain!—Force then must be employ'd;
 The desperate, only remedy——

Claud. Hold, Appius!——
 What if some luckier chance might yet prevail,
 And give her to your wishes, charm'd and willing?
 Were not that well?——

Ap. Thou mean'st to trifle with me!——
 But have a care!

Claud. Know then my anxious zeal,
 Still lab'ring in your service, prompted me
 To crave my sister's aid; who won at length,
 By my unwearied pray'r, at length consents
 To undertake our cause.

Ap. That may be something——
 She is Virginia's friend——

Claud. 'Tis an event
 I scarce could hope—And what has mov'd her to't,
 Unless a secret passion for Icilius,
 Unwarily have stol'n upon her peace——

Ap. Oh, gods, that were such fortune!

Claud. Discord, Appius,
 Must first destroy their peace—let jealousy
 Distil her bane to taint their growing loves!
 Light up resentment! Fan the dang'rous fire
 With dark surmises, hints, invented tales,
 'Till it burst all the tender bands in sunder,
 That knit their souls! Then seize the blest occasion,
 Then press her home; and ere the sudden breach
 Their jars have made, is clos'd, step in between,
 And sever them for ever!

Sp. Now, by heav'ns,
 Some whisp'ring deity inspir'd the thought!
 It may succeed---and then!---I'll fly this moment,
 And throw me at her feet!---With sighs, and tears,
 And all the moving eloquence of love,
 I'll try to melt her heart! For who can paint
 The energy, the transports of a lover?
 Methinks I'm sick of pow'r without Virginia!
 I feel a void! There's something wanting here!

[*Striking his breast.*]

Come then, sweet God of love, and crown my wishes,
 And touch the lovely maid with equal fire!
 I'm wild with transport!---Oh, ye tedious hours,
 Add feathers to your wings! that I may prove
 The united joys of empire and of love! [*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT,

A C T II.

SCENE, Marcia's Apartment.

Marcia and Icilius, meeting.

MARCIA.

LUCIUS Icilius, welcome!
Icil. Gen'rous Marcia,
 Compos'd of faith and honour, constant ever!
 Accept such thanks, as one beyond all bounds
 Oblig'd, can pay!---May the blest gods above
 Reward thy truth, and, at thy greatest need,
 Grant me a friend as noble as thyself!
 Oh, Marcia!---I have seen---

Mar. What means, Icilius,
 This strange disorder?

Icil. But this morn I left
 Our camp---In one short hour, the space I measur'd
 'Twixt Algidum and Rome, and fondly hop'd
 In Marcia's friendship and Virginia's love
 To banish all my cares.—But, as I pass'd

Virginus'

Virginius' gates, these eyes beheld a sight
That curdled up my blood!—The tyrant Appius
Was coming forth.—What may this mean?

Mar. Icilius,

How shall I answer thee?—In vain, alas!
Would I conceal what thou too soon must know!

Icil. My heart misgives me! Does the high-thron'd
villain

Attempt my love?—Oh, vengeance, vengeance, Marcia!
Or is't a lover's vain surmise?—

Mar. Oh, no!—

Icil. I shall grow mad!—distracting, horrid thoughts
Crowd fast upon me!—Marcia, if thy soul
Be not insensible to ev'ry touch
Of friendship, or of pity; if the pangs
Of bleeding love, and tort'ring jealousy
Can move thee, speak!—Reveal my misery!
Suspence is death!

Mar. Icilius, that I pity thee,
The heav'ns bear witness for me!

Icil. Ah, Virginia!

Thou shalt have justice; nor shall the curst Appius
Invade thy helpless innocence unpunish'd!

Mar. Icilius, think of that no more—His pow'r
Mocks all resistance! His impetuous will,
Alone the measure of all right and wrong!
Inflexible his soul; nor would he change
His destin'd purpose, though the suppliant earth
Were humbled to his feet.

Icil. Away—his pow'r

I reckon not.—But be sure if he attempt
Against Virginia aught, this hand shall reach him
Through his arm'd lictors, though each deadly axe
Were levell'd at this head.

Mar. Some dread event,
I fear, will be the issue of this strife,
Unless some pitying god look down on Rome,
And either melt the stubborn soul of Appius,
Or move Icilius for his country's sake,
(His country threaten'd to be drench'd in blood!)
Greatly to quit his claim, and shew the force
Of Roman virtue.

Icil.

Icil. Do I hear aright?—
Amazement!—This from thee—*Marcia!*—the friend
Of my Virginia!--*Marcia*, whose soft pity
Was wont to be the balm of all my woes?

Mar. Ah, *Lucius!* Couldst thou read within my breast
In what deep characters thy woes are grav'd;
Knew'st thou, thy hapless fate alone extorts
The bitter, but yet necessary counsel;
Then wouldst thou know too, *Marcia* is not wanting
In pity to *Icilius*, nor in faith
To his Virginia

Icil. Still obscure and strange—
Some myst'ry yet behind---But, *Marcia*, say,
If I could part from all my soul holds dear,
Tear from my panting breast this rooted passion,
And quite forget that e'er I lov'd Virginia!
What would become of her?—That dear, kind maid!
What would be her despair, her lost condition,
Should I, on whose firm trust her gentle soul
Relies, forsake her?

Mar. Is all this distress
For her alone?---Lest she should over-grieve
For such a loss?

Icil. What dark and dreadful meaning
Lurks underneath these words?

Mar. The mighty gods
Direct thee for the best!

Icil. 'Thou mak'st me tremble!
And yet I know not why---Thou canst not mean—
Ah, no!---Let me shun that!---My very soul
Shudd'ring starts back, as from a precipice,
To look that way!---I dare not think such ruin!--
For were she false!—

Mar. *Icilius*, calm thy spirit—
And stand prepar'd for all---Think it not strange,
E'en though Virginia should—

Icil. Stop, *Marcia*, stop!
Think whither thou art going!---Oh, my heart!
What feel I here!---The damps of death are on me!---
What was't?---Thou said'st ev'n tho' Virginia should---
Should what?— Speak!—

Mar. Lucius, my heart bleeds for thee!
 Compose this agony—Alas! I meant
 To say, ev'n though she should consent, alarm'd
 By danger, and perhaps too, her young bosom
 Warm'd with ambition, and the flatt'ring hopes——

ICIL. Ruin'd!—Betray'd!—Undone!—She's false!
 'Tis so!——

Virginia's false!—Oh, may the righteous gods
 Avenge me!—But yet hold—Can it then be?——
 Say, art thou not deceiv'd?—I know thou art—
 Can I forget, in our first hours of love,
 How her young heart, unpractis'd in deceit,
 Spoke through her eyes, and fondly told the secret
 Her tongue conceal'd?—But then, at length, when
 By my soft flame, and melted into tenderness, [warm'd
 In broken words, unutterably sweet,
 Hiding her crimson blushes in my bosom,
 And sighing soft, she own'd she lov'd Icilius!
 That my soul sicken'd with excess of bliss?

Mar. Why, what a wretch am I!—Can I bear this?
[Aside.

ICIL. Could she be thus, yet afterwards betray me
 For Appius?—High and proud, rugged, severe,
 Ill-pair'd with her in temper, as in years?
 It cannot be——

Mar. It seems thou know'st not, Lucius,
 The force of vanity in female hearts.
 Well may it shake Virginia's constancy,
 To see a lover kneeling at her feet,
 Who, with a nod, commands imperial Rome;
 To see, where'er she turns her wand'ring eyes,
 The capitol, the forum, the comitia,
 Fill'd with the glories of his ancestors!
 Statues and trophies! monuments! inscriptions!
 Then fancy pictures the arm'd listors standing
 In order rank'd before her palace gate,
 To wait her coming forth; while she assumes
 Distinguish'd place amidst the noble matrons.
 Alas! Icilius, these are charms too mighty
 For our weak spirits!

ICIL. Marcia, cruel Marcia,
 Cease thus to rend my agonizing soul!
 Virginia's false, and so is womankind!

Let me begone!---The light grows odious to me!
 Away—to th' camp—there 'midst the throng of arms,
 Seek from the savage Æqui that relief
 My woes demand!---Secure, at least, to find
 A faith more firm, and a less cruel foe!
 Yet ere I quit these hated walls for ever,
 Once more I will behold the perjurd maid;
 I will! and in the bitterness of soul
 Upbraid her with my wrongs!

[*Going.*]

Mar. Yet stay, Icilius!

For mercy, but a moment stay, and hear me!

[*Exit Icilius.*]

He's gone!---What have I done?---A horrid deed!
 Methinks I dread to look within myself,
 I am so black, so guilty!---Let me hide me
 From thought---I dare not think---Ah, poor Virginia!
 Abus'd Icilius!---Wretched, wretched Marcia! [Exit.]

SCENE, Virginia's Apartment.

Plautia and Virginia.

Plaut. My dearest child, take comfort —

Vir. Oh, my Plautia!

My more than mother!---Thou, whose tender care
 Nurs'd up my infant weakness, now my friend!
 What comfort can I know, when all I love
 Is far away, expos'd to ev'ry chance
 Of cruel war!---That dear, that faithful breast,
 Where my soul lives, where ev'ry wish and hope,
 As to their center tend, perhaps this moment
 Bleeds by some hostile spear!---while fatal Appius
 Most basely in his absence, dares invade
 The peace and honour of the maid he loves!

Plaut. The gods, my child, shall shield thee from his
 violence!

Vir. I do submit me to their gracious will.

Perhaps my death—I know not---Methinks, Plautia,
 But for Icilius, I could wish to die!
 And something whispers to my boding soul,
 (A still and secret voice that speaks within)
 Ere long I shall!

Plaut. Banish these idle terrors—
 The fears of fancy—

Vir.

Vir. Plautia, but last night
The vision of Lucretia stood before me!

Plaut. Alas, my child! it was a dream---no more—

Vir. A dream!—this mid-day sun not now beholds me
With senses more awake!---methinks I see
And hear her still!---that more than human form!
That voice! that action! grave, majestic, sad!
Daughter, she said (pointing to a large wound
On her fair bosom, that yet dropp'd with blood)
Behold Lucretia, who for glory died!
Remember, that this path is always open
To virtue, and to fame!---Then fighting, thus!
She parted from my sight!—

Plaut. 'Twas terrible!

Vir. Oh, 'twas a hint from fate---my father absent---
Icilius too---myself, a helpless maid,
Expos'd to all the insolence of power—
Plautia, this mighty shade in pity came
T' assist my virtue, by her great example,
And teach me how to die!

Plaut. Virginia, hear me—

Trust to my cautious age and ripe experience;
Ere long thy father will return---with him
Icilius comes---till then be mild with Appius:
Sooth his wild rage; deprive him not of hope;
Lest arm'd with pow'r, and stung by thy rash scorn,
Like a fell wolf, the shepherd far away,
He wrong thy helpless innocence.

Vir. Oh, Plautia!

Must I dissemble? flatter? must I act
A part my soul abhors?---unskill'd in arts,
That false ones use!—

Plaut. Compell'd by strong necessity,
Such fraud is virtue.

Vir. What will fate do with me!

Oh, heav'ns! support me, Plautia, or I sink—
Look where the tyrant comes!---I cannot bear
The terror of his presence!

Plaut. Now beware,
How you provoke his rage;---be constant, firm,
And meet him with a settled brow. [Exit Plautia.

Enter Appius.

Vir. Lord Appius!

Ap. Forgive this rashness, fair Virginia,
That I presume t'appear before you, thus
Unwelcome to your eyes, and half forbid!
But, Oh, the torments not to be endur'd,
The agonies I feel! They drive me on
Against all hope!--I would obey, but cannot!
My trembling limbs unbidden bear me to thee,
And my fond soul wants power to check their course;
Ah, then! if thou hast pity in thy nature,
If e'er that tender bosom heav'd with sighs,
At some sad tale of wretched, hopeless love,
Bleeding, distracted, torn with wild despair,
Look, look on me! for all that woe is mine!

Vir. It ill befits the glory of great Appius
To mock an humble maid——

Ap. Alas, Virginia!

Mock thee?—but well I know thou canst not mean it!
Mock thee?—By heav'ns, all greatness, power, and pride,
Empire, and rule, degraded fall before thee,
And vanish into nothing!—Turn not from me!

Vir. My Lord, my Lord!—without reproach and
How may a Roman virgin dare to listen [shame
To words like these?—and in a father's absence?
And what can the great high-born Appius mean,
But scorn, and ruin to Virginia?

Ap. Cruel!

Thou know'st——

Vir. My Lord, I know my humble lot
Has plac'd me far beneath you; yet this heart
Is not less sensible of shame and baseness,
Than if it beat with high patrician blood.

Ap. By heav'ns, thou wrong'st my meaning and my
My love is pure as thy own rosy blushes! [honour;

Vir. My Lord, you wrong yourself, you wrong your
And that of your immortal ancestors, [glory,
By such a mean pursuit——some noble dame——

Ap. Talk not of others!--Thou alone hast empire,
Within this breast!--Others there are, 'tis true,
And noble too---but, ah, how unlike thee!
My soul grows dull, and sickens at their sight——

Oh,

Oh, charming maid! Thou'rt of a different mould!
 Thy sweetness, innocence, and artless truth,
 Thy nameless graces, and thy virtues join'd,
 Ennoble thee above all high descent,
 And dignify my choice! and here, I swear
 I mean thee for my bride!

Vir. Away, my Lord---

Have you forgot th' inviolable law
 Yourself ordain'd, that interdicts such union?

Ap. Have I deserv'd so little of my country,
 As not to claim an instant revocation
 Of any law that dooms me to be wretched?
 Before to-morrow's sun awake the world,
 It shall be done---

Vir. I must not, dare not hear
 Language like this---My Lord, let me intreat you
 To leave me till my father be return'd;
 The daughter of a Roman citizen
 Cannot without a stain admit such visits.

Ap. Cruel!---What banish me from thy lov'd sight
 For days!---whole days and nights!---it must not be!
 Here let me fall, and breathe my faithful-vows!
 Here, on the spotless altar of thy hand,
 Swear endless truth and love!

[*Kneeling.*

Vir. Rise, rise my Lord!

[*Alarmed.*

Enter Icilius.

Icil. Ha!--do I see aright!

Vir. Icilius here!

Ap. He here!---curst chance!---

Icil. By all the pow'rs above,
 'Tis so! ev'n as she said! sure my kind genius
 Guided me here, that this fond, credulous heart
 Might doubt no more, nor longer be abus'd
 By one so false! so fatal!

Vir. Ah, Icilius!

What mean these words?---Think'st thou---

Icil. Madam, 'tis well---

You have done nobly, while this wretch, this drudge,
 Was absent, lab'ring in the fields of death!

You've made a choice most worthy of you. Appius,
 Alone could merit such a heart as yours?

'Tis true, your vows are mine; but what are vows?

Your mounting spirit scorns to fly at less
Than empire!—Diadems perhaps, and sceptres!
Fit recompence for Appius! mighty Appius!
'The righteous lawgiver! the glorious patron
Of liberty, and father of his country!

Ap. Insolent Tribune, hence! dost thou presume
With scurril taunts?—

Icil. What, thou art champion for her!--
She well deserves it—

Vir. Is this well, Icilius?---
From thee this usage?

Ap. By the gods, sweet ma'd,
I will revenge thy wrongs; they're mine!--Plebeian!
'Thy speech, as base as thy ignoble birth,
Shall cost thee dear!--Respect restrains my rage,
Or with this arm I would chastise thee hence!

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*]

Icil. By heav'ns, Decemvir, but unsheath thy sword,
And thou o'erpay'st my wrongs---I'll call thee noble!--
But I forgot---thy outrage is entrusted
'To safer hands---to lictors, guards, and armies.

[*Appius coming up fiercely with his sword drawn,
Virginia rushes between.*]

Vir. For mercy hold!--Oh, spare my soul these ter-
Nor drive me to despair!—

[*rors,*]

Ap. Thou lovely fair
Compose thy breast!--here at thy feet I lay
My sword and my resentment, and disclaim
Anger, ambition, pride, and ev'ry passion,
But love!—

Icil. Is't come to this?---Gods, she avows
Her perfidy, nor thinks me worth the pains
Ev'n of a little poor dissimulation!

Vir. His anguish touches me; but conscious pride,
And injur'd honour, after such an outrage,
Forbid that he should know it---[*Aside.*] Yes---perhaps
'Tis true; and thou dost well to think me false;
Thou seest I labour not t'evade the charge,
Nor do I deign an answer!

Ap. This goes well—
I'll interpose no longer—

Icil. Yes, I see,
That heart, which once I thought the gift of heav'n
To bless my days, is sold to base ambition;
That venal heart!---not giv'n, but sold!---Go then,
Thou perjurd maid! enjoy thy guilty greatness!
Go! a new Tullia! help they impious Tarquin
To trample on thy country's bleeding bosom!
Like her, triumphant on thy haughty car,
Drive o'er thy rev'rend father's mangled corse,
And think no road too short, that leads to empire!

Vir. Go, thou! nor longer dare to violate
My ears with thy licentious, brutal speech!
Go, where I never may behold thee more!

Ap. Why this exceeds my hopes!---I thank thee,
Marcia! [*Aside.*

Icil. Yes, false one, I will go!---I see my presence
Is irksome grown to thee; yes, I will go,
And where thou never shalt behold me more!
Come, ye fierce Æqui, pierce this breast! Here make
A passage for my streaming blood!---The torrent
Shall wash away Virginia's fatal image!
I too, as well as she, will thank the hand
That gives the blow!

Vir. Resentment, grief, and pity,
Tear up my soul!---Alas, these starting tears
Will tell what passes here! [*Aside, striking her breast.*

Icil. Now, cruel maid,
Farewel!---a long, and last farewel for ever!
I will not call upon the mighty gods
To punish thee, or to avenge my wrongs---
No---while this breath of life remains, I cannot,
I cannot curse Virginia!---that lov'd name,
That once lov'd name, is dear to me ev'n still!
This only---'midst the glories of thy triumph,
Mayst thou remember, not without a pang,
Him whom thou hast undone! the wretch Icilius!
Who lov'd thee with such---but no more---Farewel.

[*Going.*

Vir. Oh, stay, yet stay, Icilius!

Ap. No, let him go. [*Exit Icilius.*
And elsewhere vent his base plebeian insolence,
While Appius at thy feet---

Vir.

Vir. Off!---hold me not!—

What, is he gone?—Distraction! madness! death!—
Return, return, Icilius—

[*Attempting to follow, but held by Appius.*]

Ap. Fair Virginia,

He merits not thy love; despise, forget him;
And, Oh, let faithful Appius bending thus,
Embracing thus thy knees!

Vir. [*Still struggling to follow Icilius, but held by Appius.*] My life! my Lucius!

He's gone! for ever gone!—hence, barb'rous tyrant!
Pollute me not with thy infected touch,
Nor longer blast my sight with such a monster!
Is't not enough thou hast undone my peace,
Blotted my fame, drove from my longing eyes
My only love, despairing, bent on death,
Stabb'd to the heart with the empoison'd thought
That his Virginia's false?—And would thy cruelty
Yet farther torture me?

Ap. Ha, is it thus?—

Dost thou then own thy love for him, thy hate
For me?—'tis well—by Heav'n's, I thank thy rage!
It has forc'd out, before thou wert aware,
The secret of thy soul, conceal'd till now,
And all thy arts unveil'd!—but for this chance
I had been fool'd!—thy looks of seeming mildness,
Thy gentle soothing speech, and soft demeanor
(Hollow and false!) had almost vanquish'd me,
And chang'd my fix'd resolves,—but since 'tis thus
I'm spurn'd, and my fond, generous, ardent passion
Thus treated—

Vir. Hence, with thy detested passion,
To fiends and furies, black as thy own soul,
If such there be! and leave me to the sorrows
Which thou hast heap'd upon me!

Ap. Now, by Hercules,
Appius again shall be himself---proud fair,
Thou hast thy wish---hence, trifling love, begone!
I give thee to the winds! my passion's o'er,
And nought but lusty appetite remains,
Which, spite of all thy peevish scorn and rage,
I will indulge to such luxurious height,

That

That gorg'd at length, and glutted, it shall sicken,
 And turn away from thy pall'd charms with loathing!
 Nor shall my vengeance rest unsatisfied——
 Icilius---He, thy minion! soon shall find
 What 'tis to have pull'd down on his crush'd head
 The wrath of Appius!---Now, go storm and rage!
 Thou shalt have cause!—For ere to-morrow's sun
 Be sunk to rest, I'll meet thee, haughty maid,
 As mighty Jove met Semele!—in thunder!

[Exit Appius.]

Vir. [After some pause, and looking wildly about her.]

Where shall I fly!---Terror, remorse, despair,
 Surround me!---Heav'n and earth abandon me!——
 Icilius gone---perhaps to death---Thou wretch!
 Whose fatal pride has plung'd thee in this gulph
 Of horror, view thyself, and then grow mad!
 Distraction!---is there no relief for woe
 Like mine?—No hope in store?—Quick, let me fly!—
 Oh, bear me, winds, to my Icilius' bosom,
 Ere stung with grief and rage, he quit for ever
 These hated walls!—Retard his flight, ye pow'rs!
 And let these streaming eyes and breaking heart
 To gentle pity melt the gen'rous youth,
 And clear my love, my honour, and my truth. [Exit.]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, Marcia's Apartment.

Appius, Claudius, and Marcia.

CLAUDIUS.

HAST thou well weigh'd th'event? Consider, Appius,
 When once the attempt is made, there's no retreat;
 To fail were ruin.

Ap. Cease thy groundless fears;
 Th'event is sure; thy claim is plausible;
 Thy proofs most clear; my hardy veterans,
 That crowd in throngs, all ready to avouch
 Whate'er I dictate; and myself thy judge.

Thou

Thou art ungrateful, Claudius—Ha!—methinks
Thou art much bound to me, who strive to gain thee
So fair a slave!---What say'st thou, gentle Marcia?

Mar. This black contrivance startles me---this shews me
My own offence---what, seize her as a slave!
A free-born maid! and with hir'd perjury,
Miscreants suborn'd, and bought for gold, despoil her
Of liberty, of innocence, of peace,
Of spotless fame!—Thou canst not be so base!

Ap. It seems that Marcia then, of all her sex,
Is turn'd an advocate for faith, and honour!

Mar. Upbraid me well thou may'st—my own sad heart,
Conscious of guilt, upbraids me yet more bitterly,
And tells me, the severe reproach is just;
Yet, thanks to the blest gods, at length these eyes
Are open'd, and my slumb'ring virtue wakes!

Ap. Hence, all ye idle sects of vain philosophers!
Sages, and moralists, and prating sophists!
Hence, with your pedant wisdom!—I'll no more on't---
Let me learn truth and virtue from a woman!
Now, Marcia, hear (to shew the deep effects
Of thy reproof) that yet before the star
Of night arise, thou shalt behold Virginia,
Thy friend Virginia, claim'd, prov'd, and adjudg'd
A slave in th' open Forum; a born slave—
Mark me, and by my sentence too, fair Marcia.

Mar. Thou sprung from gods! and dost thou claim
descent
From Hercules, who purg'd the earth of monsters!

Claud. Marcia, no more—

Mar. Away, vile sycophant!
I will not call thee brother!—This base counsel
Was thine: 'tis such pernicious flatterers,
Such busy, ready, fawning slaves, as thou art,
That choak, and stifle truth, poison all virtue,
And curse mankind with tyrants and oppressors!

Claud. 'Tis deeply spoke---but whence this sudden
For if I err not, who of late, but Marcia, [change?
To forward Appius' wish!---Whose arts contriv'd
To make a breach between two faithful lovers,
And to effect it, broke through all the ties
Of holy friendship?

Ap. Claudius, peace—perhaps
The all-perfect Marcia thinks our grosser sense
Could ne'er discover lurking at her heart
The little wanton god, who sometimes loves
To sport with such high virtue!—

Claud. Dost thou blush,
Degenerate maid?—Was this the secret spring
Of all thy zeal for Appius, all thy cares
For poor Virginia, and her threaten'd honour?
And now thy hopes are lost, would'st thou assume
A virtue which thou know'st not?

Ap. Worthy Marcia,
(To quit the licence of thy speech) learn this—
'Tis vice defeated, baffled, disappointed,
That makes such virtuous profelytes as thou art,
And fills the world with prating hypocrites!

Mar. What shall I say! Alas, what answer make
To this deep charge!—forgive me, pitying Heav'n!
And, Oh, ye hapless pair, whom I have injur'd,
Forgive me too! while thus with conscious blushes
I own my fault—I own, 'twas treach'rous love,
'That first seduc'd my wand'ring steps from virtue;
Yet guilty, and unhappy as I am,
My soul starts back with horror from a crime
Like this—'tis true; while Appius meant with honour
To wooe Virginia for his virtuous bride,
I aided, though by means not wholly just;
But this is such perdition! words are wanting
To give a name to it!—Oh, Appius!—Claudius!
Quit, quit betimes this fatal enterprize,
Nor call down thunder on your impious heads!

Ap. Away, she dreams—let's leave her—this way
Claudius. [Exit Appius and Claudius.

Mar. All's lost—there is no hope—nothing can shake
The dreadful resolution he has taken—
What scenes of blood and rage do I foresee!
Misguided, wretched Marcia! with what miscreants
Hast thou combin'd!—Now learn how dangerous
It is to venture near the verge of baseness:
A gen'rous mind should never dare to quit
Virtue's firm hold; that gone, that sacred anchor
Once parted from, there is no stop.—down drives

The desp'rate bark before the foaming torrent,
 Breaks on a rock, and sinks to rise no more!
 But, Oh, that injur'd maid! that dear Virginia!
 She little thinks what frightful mischiefs wait her!
 Much less what treach'rous hand has lent its aid,
 To her undoing!---Quick, let me fly---Ay, yet
 Prevent, if possible, th'uplifted blow!
 'Tis worse than death!--Yes, thou shalt know my guilt,
 In spite of shame thou shalt; and if there be
 A way for thee to 'scape, although the passage
 Lie through this heart, I'll pierce it for Virginia!

[Exit Marcia.

SCENE, *Icilius's Tent in the Roman Camp at Algidum;*
First an alarm, then a retreat is sounded.

Icilius enters disordered, as from fight.

Icil. Will nothing rid me of my misery!
 Do I in vain provoke the forward foe
 To end me!--Oh, Virginia!--false Virginia!---
 Great gods, behold me here, a wretch complete,
 The work of your own hands, in all your wrath!
 'Tis death must give me ease--in the still urn
 Virginia's perfidy and all my woes
 Shall sleep: rest then, my heart, nor let a groan
 Escape to tell Virginius, his false daughter
 Has ruin'd all thy peace! She has basely sold
 Her love---for wealth and pride!

[Walking about disordered.

Virginius-here!

[Surprized.

Enter L. Virginius.

L. Vir. Ay, here Icilius--

Now, in the name of all the gods, what means
 This wild despair, that shuns the light? I mark'd thee,
 When to the camp thou can'st---there on thy visage
 O'erspread with ghastly pale, I saw a grief
 That struck my heart---Art thou resolv'd on death?
 Why else rush desp'rate on a thousand swords,
 As ev'n but now thou didst, as if to court it?
 Alas, Icilius! little dost thou show
 Regard for me, and less for poor Virginia,
 Whose life, whose being, hangs on thine!

Icil.

Icil. Oh, torture!

But yet I must dissemble. [*Aside.*] Say, Virginius,
Much honour'd, and much lov'd! say, is it strange,
A Roman should forget the thoughts of danger,
When glory, and his country's wrongs, inspire him?

L. Vir. This false reserve, Icilius, is unworthy
Both of thyself and me. Is our alliance
So hateful, that for refuge thou wouldst fly
Into the arms of death? Perhaps Virginia,
Too fond, has surfeited thy sickly flame,
And now is cheap in thy esteem. If so,
I will absolve thee from this odious contract;
And duty, and submission to a father,
Shall teach her, howsoe'er it wring her heart,
Without complaint, or aught but silent tears,
Unmurm'ring to resign thee.

Icil. Down, my heart!

Down, swelling grief! [*Aside.*] Virginius, hear me speak:
If e'er my soul, since first she could distinguish
Among mankind, wish'd other than to be
Join'd in indissoluble bonds to thee,
Thy blood, and all thy virtues, may the gods
Abandon me this hour! Then wound me not
So deep, to think that ought in thy alliance
Is irksome to me; much less, that Virginia
Has surfeited my love with too much kindness.
Ah, no!—Perhaps I may—I know not why—
But to myself, methinks, my soul seems heavier
Than she was wont to be; and I would rouse me
By action. This distemp'ration of mind,
This wayward sickliness, that has no name,
Is one of those conditions human nature
Holds her frail tenement by— But it will pass—

L. Vir. Words, words, mere words!—I see, thro' all
A black corroding grief, that gnaws thy heart; [this veil,
Which since thou'rt obstinate to hide—No more—
I've done—This only, then farewell—Whene'er
Thy need requires, I tell thee, old Virginius
Has yet a heart that's firm, a hand to aid thee
Against the world combin'd. But have a care,
Take heed, young man—My friendship and my honour
Must not be trifled with—This touches both—

This mean reserve!—By heav'ns, I know no art;
 For I have nought to hide. But in thy breast
 I find that other maxims rule. There's mystery,
 And deep disguise, which noble minds disdain.
 There's something dark—and where 'tis dark—'tis foul.

[Exit angrily.]

Icil. At length he's gone. This was a trying conflict.
 With rage and grief suppress'd, my heart was bursting,
 Yet scorn'd complaint. No, should I stoop to use
 A father's pow'r, to gain a forc'd consent,
 And hug a wretched carcase in my arms,
 The nobler part, the mind, all over stain'd,
 Blotted and scrawl'd with Appius' hated image?
 Could I bear this? No. Could the angry gods
 Add aught to the full load of woe I bear,
 It would be thus, thus to possess Virginia!

Enter a Guard with Caius.

Guard. A messenger
 To Lucius Icilius from Rome.

Caius. This, from Valerius, to his friend Icilius
 I am commission'd to deliver. [Presenting a letter.]

Icil. Valerius! Ha! what may this message mean?

[Reads.]

[Aside.]

“Valerius to Icilius sends health.

“These shall inform you, that your presence and aid
 are here most necessary, in defence of the unhappy Vir-
 ginia, against the attempts of the enraged Appius, who,
 finding all his arts to seduce her vain, now threatens open
 violence. The distressed maid, whose truth and constancy
 your unjust suspicions have much wronged, is prepared to
 give most signal, tho' fatal, proofs of both, unless you in-
 terpose your timely succour. Farewel.”

Heavens! can it be?—I see Valerius' hand
 A witness to its truth. Can I have been
 So fatally deceiv'd?—My heart misgives me!

Caius. Icilius, pardon me—th' extremity
 In which I left Valerius and his friends,
 Demands my utmost haste. I hav't, besides,
 In charge, to let Virginius know what ruin
 Awaits his most unhappy child.

Icil. O! Caius!

I know thee now; Virginius' faithful freedman.
 Alas! for pity, tell me, if thou know'st
 Aught of Virginia—What has driv'n the tyrant
 To this precipitate course?

Caius. A fresh repulse,
 Which, urg'd with too much bitterness and scorn,
 Has fir'd him ev'n to madness, and he breathes
 Nought but revenge and violence. I saw,
 Ere I departed, at her father's house,
 The hapless maid, all fainting, drown'd in tears;
 With her Valerius, and her uncle Numitor,
 Horatius, Plautia, Marcia, Claudius' sister,
 Who, weeping, asks forgiveness, owns some treach'ry
 She has been guilty of; and 'tis from her
 Appius' designs are known.

Isid. Why, then, there lives not
 A wretch so curs'd as I! [*Aside.*] Oh, Caius! haste,
 Lose not a moment—Hence! [*Exit Caius.*] Virginia!—
 Torn with remorse and shame, despair and love,
 I fly, thou dear, thou gen'rous, faithful maid,
 To thy relief. Grant me, all-gracious Heav'n,
 But one bless'd hour, to wipe my guilt away,
 To pierce the tyrant's heart, and to protect
 My injur'd love; the next, decree my fall. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E, Virginia's Apartment.

Enter Virginia and Marcia.

Mar. Yet let me call myself thy friend, Virginia!
 And shall I faithful add,
 Tho' for a while misled by fatal love,
 That wand'ring and deceitful fire, I stray'd,
 Wide erring from the paths of truth and honour?
 Yes, let this shame, these tears, wash out the stain.
 Oh, might I live to see thee safe from treason,
 And bless'd with love, my soul could ask no more!
 But if the fates, averse, have doom'd, sweet maid,
 That thou must fall, for glory fall, thy Marcia,
 Once the companion of thy youth and trust,
 Tho' now a wretch, shall nobly perish with thee.

Vir. Marcia, once more belov'd, and faithful too!
 I see thee now, I know thee by that virtue
 I once so lov'd, and brighter now than ever!

The intervening mist, that passion rais'd,
Is clear'd away, and all is fair again.

Mar. This goodness weighs me down. My heart's too
To speak—then let me thus pour out my thanks, [full
My grateful tears, in thy forgiving bosom.

Vir. Ah, my lov'd Marcia! 'tis enough—too much.
I'm satisfy'd. Urge then no more a fault
Thy hapless passion caus'd. I know too well
The tyrant pow'r of love; Icilius' charms,
How irresistible.

Mar. Thou hast restor'd me
To life and happiness!

Vir. From this sweet union
My breast derives new hopes; and may the pow'rs
That watch o'er innocence look down propitious!
But chiefly thou, bright goddess, Chastity!
Thou, to whose honour ancient Rome decreed
Temples and altars, when thy own Lucretia
For glory bled! do thou protect thy votary
From violence and shame!

Enter Plautia.

Plaut. Thy uncle, Numitor,
Without expects thee. News of great import
Are from the camp but now arriv'd. All Rome
Is in confusion; what the circumstance,
He can deliver. We must now attend him. [Exeunt:

S C E N E, a Garden.

Enter Appius:

Ap. Wherefore did trifling love's ignoble fire
Melt this firm breast? My soul was form'd for empire,
For war; to guide the car, to wield the sword,
Or in the senate teach the stubborn fathers
My will was law, and my decrees were fate.
But now the war, the tumult is within: [Marcia!
It rages here. [Pointing to his breast.] Deserted too by
Curse on her ill-tim'd fears, and coward virtue!

Enter Rufus to him hastily.

Ruf. Appius, I come with news to shake all spirits
But thine. From different quarters messengers,
Breathless with heat and speed, are just arriv'd,
Who tell of the defeat of both our armies:

On the first onset, the perfidious cohorts
Turn'd back, and fled ; not broken by the enemy,
But resolute beforehand not to conquer,
Thro' hate and spleen to the decemvirate,
Lest aught of happy should befall the state
Beneath their government.

Ap. Malicious gods !

From this time I renounce your temples, altars,
Your false, precarious aid ; and on this arm
And this firm spirit alone will build my fortune.
What, is the fatal news divulg'd ?

Ruf. 'Tis spread

Thro' universal Rome ; the madding populace
Tumultuous rise ; confusion, havock, spoil,
Are all on foot.

Ap. Oh, for the bolts of Jove,
To wield amongst them !—Yet this very night,
Whate'er befall, I swear to sacrifice
That peevish, scornful maid ; that racks me thus,
To love and to revenge !

Ruf. Surely, my Lord,
'Twere safer to defer the execution
'Of your design, till this most dang'rous storm
Be overblown——

Ap. No, by my great progenitor,
Alcides, I will on ! Like him, I'll combat
This many-headed monster, this base hydra,
The rascal people, to the utmost verge
Of life and death !

Ruf. Howe'er, these dire commotions
Should instantly be quell'd ; we must assuage
The present heat.

Ap. Go thou, and find out Claudius ;
Bid him inform my colleagues of this news ;
Let them assemble straight, in Mars's temple,
The senate—We must use them now—We want
Their popular name, and their authority,
To quell the rabble rout. This done, let Claudius
Repair to me before I meet the senate :
For I'll not quit, or slack, for this impediment,
The course I have resolv'd. The proud Virginia,
Before another sun gilds these seven hills,

Shall yet be mine; nor shall the curs'd Icilius
 Escape this arm. Then let to-morrow come;
 And if I fall, I fall with glorious ruin!
 Secure of bliss, whate'er my fortune prove,
 I'll triumph, glutted with revenge and love!

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *an Apartment in Virginius's House.*

Enter Virginia, Plautia, and Marcia.

VIRGINIA.

WHAT dost thou tell me? My Icilius come?

Plaut. The slaves without have seen him hur-
 With eager looks and pace. [rying hither,

Mar. Let me retire;

I dare not look on him. The wretched Marcia
 Must needs be horror to his eyes.

Vir. No, Marcia,

Thou shalt remain, and he shall know thy services,
 And all thy generous friendship.

Enter Icilius.

Icil. My Virginia!

[*After some pause, as recollecting himself.*]

Alas! forgive me, that I call thee so.

I had forgot I was a wretch, a criminal,
 And must not call thee mine. The sight of thee
 Had banish'd for a moment from my memory
 My deep dy'd guilt, and call'd back former times,
 And happier scenes, when all was peace and love.

Yet hear me; for I ask thee not for pardon;

I ask thee not to give me back that love,
 Which once was all the treasure of this heart;

I've squander'd it away, and must not murmur
 That nothing now is left me but mere misery,
 To fill the aching void.

Vir. My vows are heard!

He is return'd, and full of truth and love!

[*Aside.*
Icil.]

Icil. Turn not away, but hear me; for, I swear,
The dang'rous cloud that's bursting o'er thy head,
Once past, with patient grief I will endure
Whate'er thy utmost rigour shall impose.

Vir. No more; I cannot bear it. Yes, my Lucius,
I'm thine, for ever thine! My kindling heart,
At thy approach, with sympathetic love,
To meet thee springs, and with thy gen'rous flame
Transported, longs to mix its faithful fires.

Icil. Gods, gods! this is too much! such sudden bliss
Pouring upon me!—Sure I'm in a dream!
Some sweet illusion, that thus mocks my fancy
With shadowy scenes of joy!—Here let me fall,
And breathe my sighs——

[*Kneeling.*]

Vir. [*Raising him.*] How sweet it is to love!
Methinks my bosom feels as if some treasure,
Long lost, were now, by an immediate act
Of Heav'n's own bounty, to my hopes restor'd.

Icil. Is't possible? Ah, let me press thee thus
Against my trembling breast, and hold thee fast!

[*Embracing.*]

Thus folding thee, thus, let thy pitying heart
Tell mine, in nimble beatings, thou forgiv'st me,
That I am bless'd, and thou art ever mine!
Ha! do my eyes deceive me? Marcia here!

Vir. If thy Virginia's love indeed be precious
In Lucius' eyes, next to the gracious gods, [*perhaps,*
Behold the gen'rous friend, [*Pointing to Mar.*] to whom,
Thou ow'st that yet she lives; that without shame
She dares look up, and fondly gaze upon thee!
Thou dear, kind maid! [*Embracing Mar.*] without whose
timely succour

The lost Virginia had perhaps this moment
Been a despis'd, dishonour'd, wretched slave.
Oh, Lucius!——

Mar. Cease, Virginia, to oppress
His gen'rous mind. Thou know'st, th' unhappy Marcia
Has less deserv'd his pardon than his scorn.

Icil. No more, fair Marcia; let nought inauspicious,
Let no unkind remembrance now pollute
This perfect bliss. Hast thou not sav'd Virginia?
And can I e'er repay the mighty debt?

I do

I do believe thy soul is virtuous, noble,
 Tho' for a while thy guardian genius slumber'd,
 Neglectful of his charge — But yet, my heart,
 Thou must not know repose.

[*Aside.*]

Vir. What means my Lucius?
 There's something lab'ring in thy breast.

Icil. Thou dear,
 Lov'd maid! my soul, long toss'd in troubles,
 Amidst these transports, for a while suspended
 Her racking cares, and catch'd at hope too soon.

Vir. Oh, ease my throbbing bosom!

Icil. My Virginia!
 The jewel I had lost, I have recover'd!
 But, Oh, not yet secur'd! For, know, to render
 All opposition to his desp'rate purpose
 Hopeless and vain, the tyrant has assembled
 His crew of ruffians from all parts. The levies
 New rais'd; are just arriv'd in dreadful throngs,
 And awe the trembling city. No assistance,
 No human aid can now defend thy innocence;
 Nothing but flight.

Vir. Ye guardian pow'rs, protect me!
 Where shall I fly? —

Icil. Compose thy troubled breast:
 All may be well. With a fond lover's care
 I would attend thy steps, and guard my treasure
 From ev'ry ill; but, Oh! imperious honour
 Forbids me now to leave my wretched country
 A prey to faction, tyranny, and rapine,
 That reign within these walls; while the proud foe,
 With fire and sword, advancing to our gates,
 Threatens to lay imperial Rome in dust.
 Thy uncle Numitor will be the guide
 And partner of thy flight; he will conduct thee
 To Ardea, where the good Herminius, bound
 By ties of blood, and ancient friendship, dwells;
 His sacred hearth, and hospitable gods
 Are ready to receive thee.

Vir. Ah, my Lucius!
 How transient was the momentary joy
 That swell'd my eager hopes! — Methinks I feel

A shivering,

A shivering, like the approach of death!
Sure some presage!—

Icil. Thou dearest maid! have comfort.
Are there not gods above? When virtue suffers,
'Tis their own cause. But let us haste; the senate
Is now assembling. Let us seize the occasion
(While Claudius and the fierce Decemvir meet them)
To lead thee hence. When once th' impending storm,
That's gathering o'er our heads, be overblown,
Thou quickly shalt return to bless these eyes:
Then settled calms, and gentle peace, shall sooth
Each anxious care; auspicious Love shall prune
His ruffled wings, and point each shaft with gold;
And sacred Hymen light his nuptial torch;
To guide us on our way to endless bliss. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Street in Rome.*

Enter Appius, Rufus, and Claudius.

Ap. Icilius now in Rome!

Ruf. By your command,
Watching in yon retreat, I saw him enter
Virginus' gates.

Ap. Confusion! we're discover'd!
There's some design on foot. Is thy band ready?
[*To Claudius.*

Claud. They're all prepar'd.

Ap. Ha, Claudius! look, look yonder!
They're coming forth this instant. Marcia too!
'Tis she who has betray'd us—There they go—
See, Numitor conducts my lovely prize!
By Heav'ns, Icilius quits her, and returns!—
Fortune, I thank thee!—Claudius, now advance
With all thy force, and meet them in the front
That way—On my tribunal thou shalt find me.

[*Exeunt Claud. and Ruf.*

Now, my propitious stars, shine out! Now speed
My glorious hopes, that I may taste the sweets
That wait on empire! Let the vulgar herd,
By slow pursuits of art, and patient labour,
Attain their ends; but let me, like a god,
At once stretch out my arm, and seize my joy! [*Exit.*

SCENE,

SCENE, *the Gate Collina in Rome.*

While a march is playing, L. Virginius enters with a band of soldiers.

L. Vir. At length, my valiant friends, and fellow-soldiers,
 We tread the parent soil, where first we drew
 Our breath. This is no time for studied forms
 Of speech. With hurry'd march, and wounds unheal'd,
 We've left our camp, and here are come, to conquer
 Or die. There is no mean; our hard oppressor,
 Already victor o'er our laws, our liberties,
 Our fortunes and our lives, is not content,
 Unless he may extend his wide dominion,
 Over our honours too: our maids, our matrons,
 Must glut his impious lust; force must compel,
 Where treason can't seduce—My child, Virginia,
 My age's darling, whom my choice and word
 Had long since destin'd to the brave Icilius,
 Your tribune, must be forc'd from my embrace,
 To a loath'd purpose. Will ye bear it, Romans?
 Say, shall your old centurion, bent with years,
 And cumb'rous arms, who on his breast yet bears
 The mark of many a wound, in battle shar'd
 With you, my brave companions, now at last
 Be stabb'd with such a fight? A helpless daughter,
 In vain imploring aid, dragg'd to pollution?
 No, in each eye I read your noble purpose,
 To die, or free your sinking, bleeding country
 From this pernicious tyrant——

Enter Marcia to L. Virginius hastily.

Mar. Ah, Virginius!

L. Vir. Marcia, what mean these wild and frightened
 This breathless haste? [looks,

Mar. Virginia, Oh, Virginia!——
 My treach'rous brother——

L. Vir. Ha! Virginia, saidst thou?
 Claudius!—Virginia!—Ye avenging gods!——
 Why join'st thou thus their names?—Speak, thou dear
 Tho' thy perfidious brother be a traitor, [maid!
 Thy faithful, gen'rous breast holds no alliance
 With his black crimes.

Mar.

Mar. Yes, thou brave son of Rome!
I am a wretch! I've wrong'd thee, basely wrong'd thee!
The tale's too long to tell; but I've betray'd
My friend, my trust, nor dare I to prophane
The sacred name of faithful. But I'll die,
Or purge my guilt away.

L. Vir. [*Hastily.*] Where is my daughter? [A slave!

Mar. Torn from my arms! She's lost! she's gone!—

L. Vir. A slave! What mean'st thou?—Death and
Where is she? [madness!—Speak—

Mar. Ah! where now she is I know not.

But, some few minutes since, my impious brother,
Attended by a band of ruffians, seiz'd her,
As we were coming forth, and dragging her,
Spite of the gath'ring crowd, to the tribunal
Of the Decemvir, claim'd her for his slave.

L. Vir. My friends, my fellow citizens, my country-
Say, shall a Roman suffer wrongs like these? [men!

Mar. Then started forth a train of perjur'd miscreants,
With ready witnesses to support th' imposture;
And the fierce judge, without remorse or shame,
At once pronounc'd her doom. Icilius then
Rush'd in between; a desp'rate tumult rose;
Daggers were drawn; a mingled cry was heard;
Blood stream'd on ev'ry side; the women fled,
Loud shrieking. Soon the torrent bore away
Virginia from my side. 'Midst the confusion,
Your name and your arrival were proclaim'd.
That instant, spurr'd by friendship, grief, and duty,
I flew to find you out, and to relate
The horrid tale. Farewel! These swelling eyes
Shall ne'er be clos'd in sleep, till I have found
Where my perfidious brother has conceal'd
The injur'd maid. [Exit.

L. Vir. Oh, miserable Rome!
To sure destruction doom'd? Oh, Mars, Quirinus!
Our tutelar gods! where slept your watchful care,
When, in an evil hour, your blinded sons,
Misjudging, trusted to the grasp of tyranny
Their precious birthright, freedom; nay, held out
Their hands for bonds?—Away, my friends, away!

Arm'd

Arm'd as we are, let's rush into the Forum,
 And instantly assault our curs'd oppressor.
 Let us not drag our chains a moment longer;
 Let us not think we live, till we are free.
 Away, to conquer, or to die!

[*Going.*]*Enter Icilius.*

Icil. Virginius,
 A moment hold. Where dost thou run?

L. Vir. Icilius,
 My son! where is Virginia?—Ha, speak! where,
 Where hast thou left my child?—Distraction! death!—
 Without her?—Could not love and glory teach thee
 To've seen her piecemeal torn before thine eyes,
 And afterwards to've dragg'd her quiv'ring limbs
 To greet her father, rather than have left her
 A prey to tyranny and lust?

Icil. Virginius,
 But stay and hear me—

L. Vir. Too, too long I've staid!
 My lov'd Virginia! had thy wretched father
 Been near thee, never hadst thou known this shame!

Icil. Thou couldst have done no more—

L. Vir. Away, away!

Icil. Why this is madness, rage— [Impatiently.]

L. Vir. [*Surveying him.*] I see thee living—
 Yet see not her— [Raising his voice.]

Icil. Virginius, if th' impatience
 Of thy just grief, had left me pause for speech,
 Ere this I had inform'd thee, that thy daughter
 Lives yet unhurt, her freedom, and her honour
 Safe and inviolate—

L. Vir. Thank the blest'd gods!
 Still may she be their care!—But yet, Icilius—
 Safe, and inviolate!—Why then not with thee?

Icil. Know then, this is the cause: When I oppos'd
 Appius' unrighteous judgment, which decreed
 Virginia to the custody of Claudius
 'Till thy return—

L. Vir. What, has not the Decemvir
 Adjudg'd her Claudius' slave?

Icil. With patience hear me—

He would, by absolute and final sentence,
Without repeal, have doom'd her Claudius' slave,
Had not the venerable Numitor
Stood forth, and with an eloquence, which grief,
Such grief alone could minister, expos'd
The cruelty and the iniquity
Of such a shameless sentence, to deprive
A father and a Roman of his child,
Unheard—The murmur'ing throng was fir'd, and Ap-
Compell'd to respite his unjust decree [pius
'Till thy return—But mark the base condition!
E'en that the lovely maid should be consign'd
To the false charge of the pernicious Claudius,
Till her reputed father should appear
T' assert his right :

L. Virg. Perfidious, treach'rous villain!
So should my innocent child in that dark interval
Have suffer'd wrongs beyond all cure!

Icil. My blood

No more could brook restraint—I rush'd on Claudius,
And tore her from his hold; the pitying crowd
'Took part in my distress, and soon beat off
The lictors: strait the ribald crew of Appius
Fell on; a bloody fray ensu'd, and all
Was going to wreck; when 'midst the throng appear'd
Horatius and Valerius; both belov'd,
Both favour'd of the people—They at length
So far prevail'd, that the Decemvir granted,
Pretending care for peace and public weal,
(Tho' inly stung to madness) that Virginia
Should rest with Numitor till thy return,
And final issue of the cause: to him
I then resign'd my precious charge; thro' crowds
Of shouting Romans, he conducted her
In safety home. It now remains with thee,
'To think in this distressful exigence
What course is best.

L. Virg. What best?—Oh, righteous gods!
Was it for this ye gave me this dear child?
Was it for this my early care nurs'd up
Her blooming youth, and in that gracious form

Infus'd a noble and ingenuous spirit,
 To have it now disputed, after all,
 If she be mine or not?—If she shall live,
 As she was bred, in freedom and in honor,
 The virtuous daughter of a Roman citizen,
 Or sunk in everlasting infamy,
 The slave and harlot of a villain?—Ah! —
 That thought is death! I'll not endure it longer!
 I'll know the worst.—This torturing suspense
 Is insupportable!—

Icil. What wouldst thou do?

By force redress thy wrongs, and hazard all
 Upon one desp'rate cast?—Be more advis'd,
 And wait till—

L. Virg. Wait! When ev'ry hour's delay
 Cries out dishonour on me!—No, by Heav'ns,
 The shameful cause shall be this day decided!
 Another sun shall never more behold
 Virginius crouching, and depress'd with fear
 Of being father to a strumpet!

Icil. Gods!

Wilt thou rush headlong to destruction? Aid
 The tyrant's foul design, and wait thy doom
 From his corrupt tribunal?—This base claim
 Of Claudius, and his prosecuted right,
 Thou know'st is mere delusion, a vile mockery
 Of justice and wilt thou—

L. Virg. No more, Icilius—

But be persuaded that Virginius knows
 The duty of a father and a Roman.

Icil. Think on the tyrant's strength—

What counterpoise

Canst thou oppose to such unequal weight?

What valour 'gainst such odds?—'Tis sure perdition
 And must I see, with patient eyes, my love,
 My hopes all sacrific'd?—

L. Virg. I pray thee leave me—

My breast is all confusion. If my grief,
 Our ancient friendship, or my pray'r can touch thee,
 Be this the proof—A while avoid Virginia;
 Forget the ties of love, and all th' engagements
 Of plighted faith—Till this base cause is ended,

I dare

I dare not call her mine, nor can I give,
 Or thou receive the doubtful gift with honour.
 Now, my try'd warriors, if your old Centurion,
 Whene'er he led you forth to arms and glory,
 Sustain'd the shock of battle with the foremost,
 And, drop for drop, pour'd out his blood with yours,
 Now comes the time to claim your love, your aid;
 To you, and to the gods, I trust my doom,
 And stand or fall with liberty and Rome.

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE, *An Apartment in L. Virginius's House.*

L. VIRGINIUS.

THE time draws near: and fate comes hast'ning on
 Virginia's fate and mine—I must compose
 This tempest here, and settle all within
 To meet what'er may fall—Distracting doubts,
 Be still!—Ye horrid shapes of fear, avaunt!—
 Alas, in vain! My lab'ring soul can find
 No rest—Where'er she turns, terror starts up
 To thwart her way—Oh, my belov'd Virginia!
 Should'st thou be torn from me!—Let me not think on't!
 Alas, she comes this way!—I must not see her—
 She melts me so!—I cannot— [Turning away.]

Enter Virginia.

Virg. Sir, my father!

Turn not away,——what have I done?——

L. Virg. Virginia,

Why dost thou come to waken with thy presence
 Those tender thoughts, those soft remembrances,
 That war upon my firmness?—Fly, my child,
 Fly from a wretched parent, whom the wrath
 Of fate pursues---perhaps I must forget
 I ever was a father!

Virg. Oh, my heart!
 Do you forsake me too! Ah, whither, whither,
 Wilt thou betake thee now, undone Virginia,
 When ev'n a father's arms are shut against thee!
 Oh, Sir! (since now the tender name, my infancy
 First learn'd to lisp, must ever be forgot)
 What should I think?—Am I indeed not yours?
 Or do you scorn to acknowledge me your daughter,
 Stain'd as I am, and branded for a slave!

L. Virg. My tears will choak me! [*Aside.*] Go, retire, my daughter——

Thou art my own! my dearest, tenderest child!
 I glory that thou art!—Go in a while—
 Let me collect myself—The sight of thee
 Disarms me of all strength, all pow'r, and shakes
 My firmest resolutions!

Virg. Must I go,
 Thus doubtful of my fate, thus driven from you?
 Behold the poor Virginia at your feet! [*Kneeling.*
 Behold these falling tears!—whatever be
 The purpose of your soul (it must be noble,
 Since 'tis my father's.) Oh, unfold it all!
 I will not shrink, but meet it as becomes
 A Roman maid, and daughter to Virginius! [*while;*

L. Virg. She cleaves my heart! [*aside.*] Repose thyself a
 Within few moments I return—Mean time
 Avoid Icilius—let not heedless passion
 Thwart my command, but, as thou lov'st, obey. [*Exit.*

Virg. What can this mean?—My father's strict com-
 T' avoid Icilius—The strange war of passions [*mand*
 Conflicting in his breast, his broken voice,
 His starts, his eager looks, all, all declare,
 Some dread event is near!

Enter Icilius.

Icil. Alas, Virginia!—
 We're lost—thy cruel father's savage honour
 Is hurrying to destroy us! but ev'n now
 I met him going forth, and would have spoke—
 When frowning stern—Forbear, he cry'd, Icilius,
 To thwart me thus, and fiercely past along.
 I know his fatal purpose—Oh, Virginia!
 Urg'd by the Furies, he is gone to claim

Imme-

Immediate judgment, and provoke a sentence
That will undo us all—

Virg. Farewel, farewell! [Weeping.]

Icil. And wilt thou leave me thus to my despair?
Can thy own heart consent t' abandon me?
Or is Icilius such a stranger there,
That thou canst banish his remembrance from thee
Without a pang; nay, ev'n with cold indifference?

Virg. Alas! too well thou know'st this heart, Icilius,
To think that ever cold indifference
Can harbour there—my duty, not my wishes,
Commands me hence; his will, which ever was
And ever must be sacred to Virginia.

Icil. 'Tis well—thy duty bids thee tear this heart,
And thou obey'st—how pow'rful is thy duty!
But Oh, Virginia, Oh, how weak thy love.

Virg. Cruel Icilius!

Icil. Yet I swear to heav'n,
I will not leave thee till this day be past,
Tho' men and gods oppose—Thou art my own—
I will defend thee, and my rights in thee,
While I have life, nor trust to other aid;
Where'er thou goest, I will pursue thy steps,
And join my fate with thine.

Virg. Away, Icilius!—

It seems, thou know'st me not---Hast thou forgot,
I am Virginus' daughter?---Wouldst thou cancel
The bond of my obedience?---Learn to render
Thy passion worthier of thyself and me!
Learn to respect my duty, and my glory;
For tho' I love, yet still I am a Roman!

Icil. Farewel to all my hopes!—Virginia's heart,
Which once I fondly thought my own, it seems,
Is Roman all! and in the blaze of glory,
Love's weaker flame is lost!

Enter Plautia and Marcia.

Plau. My child! thy father
Impatient of his wrongs, this moment waits
To lead thee to the judgment-seat of Appius!
Our streets are throng'd—Rome pours her numbers forth,
All anxious for thy fate—My heart is broke
With tenderness, and sorrow!

Mar. Thou dear maid,
Whom I have injur'd! see, the wretched Marcia,
Sinking with guilt and grief and shame, is come
To follow thy sad steps, and loud proclaim
To heav'n and earth, ev'n in the face of Appius,
And her false brother, the detested perfidy
They have contriv'd against thee!

Vir. My kind Marcia,
All will be well — Methinks my soul seems arm'd
With heav'n-imparted strength; and lighter grown
Than usual, is beginning to shake off
These earthy bands that hold her—Now, my Lucius,
Once more farewell—forgive the few harsh words,
Which while my tongue pronounc'd, my heart disclaim-
ed;

For Oh, that I have ever fondly lov'd thee,
And ever will, till the last pulse of life
Shall cease to beat within this constant heart,
Let this embrace, and this, perhaps the last [*Embracing.*
That e'er shall bind thee to Virginia's breast,
Bear witness!

Icil. Oh, my soul!—here let me grow! [*Embracing.*
And twist my vital thread with thine so fast,
The envious Fates shall be oblig'd to close
Th' inexorable shears on both at once!

Vir. Icilius, I must leave thee!

Icil. May the gods
Abandon me, if aught shall now divide us!
No, since this desp'rate course is fix'd, Virginia,
Myself will guide thee to this base tribunal,
Where rob'd iniquity fits high enthron'd,
To tread on innocence!—Now, ye just pow'rs,
Whom we adore, exert your dreaded influence!
Now strike on virtue's side; confound the guilty,
Succour th' oppress'd, and show that ye are gods!

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E Appius's Tribunal in the Forum, A nume-
rous train of Licitors, Guards, &c.

*Enter Appius and Claudius. They come forward to the
front of the stage.*

Ap. Is all prepar'd?

Claud.

Clau. Nothing is wanting—Guards
Are plac'd in ev'ry quarter—Three strong cohorts
Possess the Forum, and forbid access
To all but friends—Virginius' followers,
A desp'rate, raging band, just hot from war,
We unawares surpris'd, secur'd, disarm'd them;
Not without blood—

Ap. That's well; my trusty Claudius,
By Heav'n that's well!—but how hast thou dispos'd
Thy sister Marcia?—Ha!—she may be dangerous!
She knows too much, and is too keen a foe.

Clau. Rufus has my command, if she approach,
To seize and instantly convey her home;
He likewise has't in charge to apprehend
Icilius, as a rebel, and to bear him
Without delay to prison.

Ap. 'Tis enough—
I'm satisfied—and yet methinks---Ah, Claudius!
There's something heavy here, that weighs me down—
I know not what—

Clau. There's no retreating now---
The die is thrown—

Ap. I hear 'em coming---Now,
My genius! Now, be mighty, and support me!
[Appius ascends the Tribunal.]

Appius, seated on his Tribunal. Claudius below. L. Virginius enters, leading by the hand his daughter Virginia. Plautia, with a train of weeping matrons following. Lictors, Guards, &c. close up each side of the stage, leaving only the front open.

Ap. Romans, you see me from this awful seat
A second time constrain'd to render judgment,
In a determin'd cause; our laws, 'tis true,
Our rights, our customs, all cry out aloud
Against such violation; but, alas!
So the necessity of these bad times
Demands; for bold sedition stalks abroad
With such gigantic strides, that Justice self
Is forc'd to quit her path!---I'll not repeat
The high indignities, the outrages,
The insults offer'd to the sov'reign magistrate;

No, Romans, let my wrongs forgotten die---
 It is not for revenge, but law, I stand;
 The sacred tables, and the even course
 Of steady justice---This is Appius' aim---
 Romans, I've done---Let either side stand forth---
 I rest in equal poise to weigh the right.

Clau. Then let my right prevail---My proofs thou know'st---

This ancient slave---a witness to the birth
 Of that young maid, in my own house---my freedman
 Davus---who, with the mother's privity
 Sold her to childless Numitoria,
 Virginius' wife---

Ap. These proofs, so long conceal'd,
 Why now produc'd?

Clau. Does Appius ask the cause?
 Does he?---'Tis well---thou shalt be satisfied;
 But then complain not after, when thou hear'st
 Ungrateful truths---

Ap. What mean these obscure hints,
 These dark surmises?---Speak---I dare thy worst.

Clau. Know then, it is for thee I prosecute
 This odious, this unpopular claim---For thee
 Am loaded with the bitter hate, and rage
 Of all the Commons.

Ap. Traitor!---How?---for me?---

Clau. For thee---Thy desp'rate, inauspicious love
 For this young maid, known to all Rome---(Nay, frown
 not---)

Threaten'd a union, which the sacred tables
 Have doom'd accurs'd---My freedman, struck with horror,
 To think a slave should stain the Appian race,
 Disclos'd his guilt, till then conceal'd from me;
 I urge my right, to snatch thee from destruction.

Ap. I'm not to learn, that boldest censure lives
 In basest mouths---The herd will still affect
 To know and reason deep!---But couldst thou think
 I meant to blot my name with such perdition?

Clau. Forgive my fears, if they have done thee wrong;
 Thy glory was the cause; therefore unmov'd
 I wait thy final sentence; if Virginius
 Have aught t' object, now let him urge it home.

L. Vir. Thou traitor!--I have hitherto been silent,
 And patiently have heard that impious tongue
 Wrong Heav'n and earth!--only that I might learn
 The full extent of this abhorr'd contrivance;
 Glaring, as is the day, to ev'ry eye!
 But, Oh, thou pander slave!--think'st thou, Virginius
 Will deign an answer to the perjurd tale?
 Disprove those caitiffs, whom thou hast produc'd,
 And wait a sentence from that faithless judge,
 Who leagu'd with thee---

Ap. Virginius, such intemp'rance
 Bespeaks a doubtful cause---Were I indeed
 The tyrant thou pretend'st, what hinders me,
 But that this moment, seizing the advantage
 Thy insolence and outrage gives, I might
 Proceed to instant judgment, and stand justify'd,
 To envy's self?---Think then, and be advis'd,
 While yet 'tis time---If thou hast aught to offer
 That can avail thee, or invalidate
 Th'accuser's claim, speak free, thou shalt be heard
 With favour; nay, by Heav'ns, myself will joy
 To see this innocent, hapless, virtuous maid,
 Whom I admire and pity, sav'd from ruin.

L. Vir. Oh, Jove, the thunderer!--This temperate
 How calm, how cool he meditates oppression! [villain!
 With what serenity he gives the stab!
 Thou tyrant, who, if Justice had her course,
 Trembling and pale, ought'st now to stand before
 The terrible tribunal of the people,
 To give account of all thy crimes!--Think'st thou
 There is that peasant slave, who could be gull'd
 By such apparent fraud!--Behold the Forum
 Block'd up with troops!--My friends, by base surprize
 O'erpower'd, in chains!--Ev'n now, a band of ruffians
 Burst forth, and seiz'd Icilius--Nay, with violence,
 The gen'rous Marcia (Ah, too nobly good,
 To be allied to a perfidious brother!)
 They seiz'd, they dragg'd along the streets of Rome!
 Because she could unfold thee, lay thee open,
 With all the foul corruption of thy heart,
 To public view!--Thou see'st I know thee, Appius;
 Spare then all farther feigning---Thou'st play'd o'er

Thy

Thy part assign'd ; now be thyself again,
Th' oppressive, bloody, bold, rapacious tyrant !
And snatch'd by open force !

Ap. Thou insolent,
Audacious rebel ! Think'st thou to patch up
Thy rotten plea, by ribaldry and railing ?
Or with thy clam'rous cries, extort thro' fear,
What right denies thee ?---No, thy venom'd rage
Shall burst thee, ere I shrink ?---Claudius, thou hast,
By fair and open proof, by living witness,
Supported well thy claim ; which this foul railer
Refuses to reply to, but by slander :
Take then thy own ; for this is my award ;
Which, by the Gods, and the offended majesty
Of Justice, unrevoked shall stand---So, hence,
And take her with thee.

Clau. I thank thee, Apiups---Come---we must re-
tire--- *[Laying hold of Virginia.*

Vir. Off !---Touch me not !---insidious, treach'-
rous monster !

[She struggling, Claudius endeavours to force her away.
Oh, gods !---help, help !---my father ! Romans ! help !
Save me !

Clau. In vain thou strugglest---Thou must hence
With me---and shalt---Thou art my slave, young maid ;
Know thy condition ; and henceforward learn
Obedience to my pleasure---

Vir. Triumph o'er
A lifeless corse thou may'st, and these torn limbs,
Stiff'ning in death, trail after thee---but never,
No, never think, while sense and vital heat
Inform this earthly mass, to part me from
The stock where first I grew ! *[Clinging to her father.*

L. Vir. No more, my daughter---
Thou see'st resistance is in vain---We must
Fulfil our destiny : there is no help :
Submit thee then, and, arm'd with patience, suit
Thy mind to thy hard fortune.

Vir. Righteous Heaven !
What, does my father give me up ?---Does he
Confirm the cruel sentence pass'd upon me ?---
Behold me then a slave !---Here, thou remorseless,
Thou

Thou perjur'd minister!---Here---bind these limbs!
 In servile fetters, manacle these hands!
 This wretched frame shall not be subject long
 To thy inhuman power!---Come then---drag me
 To dungeons, death and darkness---

L. Vir. Hold, Virginia—

Appius, thou seest I yield, nor dare I longer
 Contend against the sov'reign pow'r; the law,
 That robs me of my daughter, tho' severe,
 I do submit to; and I pray forgive
 A wretched father, if my unweigh'd speech
 Have been too bitter: now, before I go
 For ever to lose sight of this poor maid,
 Whom certainly I always thought my own,
 And as my own have lov'd, and bred, and cherish'd;
 If thou hast pity, grant this one request;
 The privilege but of a few sad moments,
 To breathe out all the anguish of my soul,
 And glut myself with grief—'Twill be some ease,
 Before we part, to take a last farewell,
 To fold her in my trembling arms once more,
 And rain my bitter tears into her bosom,
 Ere I resign her!

Ap. Be it so---but let

A guard, for more security, attend.

L. Vir. 'Tis well---I thank ye---This way, Vir-
 ginia---

Vir. My beating heart!

[Following.

L. Vir. Support me, gods!

[Aside.

[*L. Virginius and his daughter come forward on the stage.*

L. Vir. My child!

Ah, my belov'd Virginia!

Vir. My dear father!

L. Vir. I cannot utter it!---When I would speak,
 My heart-strings tremble, and affrighted nature
 Backward recoils!---My child!---must it then be?
 Must I forget all feelings of a father,
 And of a man?---Must I blot out all traces
 From this distracted brain, of what I have been?
 How I have lov'd, how train'd up thee, sweet maid,
 Now for pollution mark'd?---Oh, bloody Appius!---
 Gods, gods!---if ye are just!---Draw nearer to me---

[To Virginia.

Let me weep over thee a while---and then——
 Canst thou not guess!!---Oh, say, and spare my tongue
 The dreadful word!---Canst thou read the purpose
 That shakes me thus!

Vir. What may this mean?

L. Vir. Seest thou

This mortal point?——

[*Pulling out the dagger.*]

Vir. 'Tis as my boding heart

Prefag'd---here then my cares and danger end. [Aside.]

My father, tho' my sex and years, till now

Unvers'd in sorrow, start to look on death;

Tho' nature struggles hard, and fain would ward

The fatal blow, that cuts off all my hopes;

Yet my soul feels, and owns the deed is noble,

And worthy of my father!

L. Vir. 'Tis cruel, but yet glorious!---Thou must die,

To save thee from perdition!---Think, Oh, think

What 'tis to live a slave! the butt and mark

Of hourly shame and insult!---think upon

Thy youth, thy innocence and maiden bloom,

Stain'd and defac'd by barb'rous lust and outrage:

Think when the brutal tyrant shall be cloy'd,

To have thy rifled beauties then consign'd

To th' next gross ruffian and the next---Distraction!

Vir. Quick, quick, dispatch——

Tear up my bosom with thy steel, but spare

To rend my soul with sounds like these---Oh, strike!---

L. Vir. Thus then---[*Lifting the dagger.*] my hand

shrinks back, and ev'ry nerve

Stiffens with horror!---turn aside, my eyes,

Nor view the bloody deed!---

Vir. No more, my father——

Oh, gods!---We are observ'd!---They'll tear me from
 thee!

Here strike!---Oh, let me aid thy trembling hand!

A moment lost consigns me o'er to shame!

L. Vir. Just gods!---[*Looking up to Heaven.*] thus

then---and thus——

[*Stabbing her.*]

The only way I can, I set thee free!

Ap. What has he done! [*Starting up on his Tribunal.*]

Plaut. Oh, horrid, cruel, father!

She sinks!---She dies!---Help!--- [*Runs to support her.*]

L. Vir.

L. Virg. [*Holding up the dagger to Appius.*] Appius,
with this blood

Thee, and thy impious head, I thus devote
To the infernal gods! [*Exit, holding up the dagger.*]

Ap. Perdition seize me,
But he has murder'd her!—Attach him, Lictors,
And bear him instant—What noise is that?

[*A tumultuous noise is heard without.*]

Enter Rufus to Appius, hastily.

Ruf. My Lord, Icilius, rescu'd by the populace,
Is coming at their head; the guards on post
They have broke through, and bear down all before 'em.

Ap. Confusion!—I'm betray'd!—The slaves have sold

Claud. Let us escape, before it be too late— [me!
We must give way to th' torrent—

Ap. No, this arm
Shall stem it—and the troops that fled, shall conquer,
When Appius leads them on—Away! [*To Claudius. Ap-
pius descends in haste from his tribunal, and goes out
with Claudius.*]

Enter Marcia, with a train of weeping matrons.

Mar. [*Seeing Virginia's body.*] Oh!
Support me!—here!—here is a sight!—turn here,
And stiffen into stone!—See that sweet bosom,
All gor'd and bloody, heaving yet in death!
Look on her quiv'ring lips, and that dead pale
That creeps o'er all her bloom! [*A loud shout is heard.*]

Then enters Icilius at the head of the people.

Icilius. [*Seeing the body, he is struck with horror, and stands
fixed in astonishment for some time—at last he kneels
down by her.*] My Virginia!

[*Virginia at the sound of his voice, endeavours to raise
herself—She looks at him for some time, unable to speak;
then sinks down, and with a groan expires.*]

Icilius. [*Starting up from the ground.*] Oh, blast these
eyes,

Some speedy fire from heav'n!—dry up all sight!
Lest looking here, I strike against the gods,
That doom'd me such a wretch! Gone, gone for ever!

It is not to be borne! — the only way
Is thus! — [Going to stab himself,

Enter L. Virginius, who catches his arm.

L. Vir. What means thy rage? — Look here! — his
impious blood
Smokes on my dagger's point!

[Holding up the bloody dagger.]

Icil. [Struggling.] Unhand me, murd'rer! —
Thou butcher of thy child! — there, parricide!
Behold thy triumph there! —

[Pointing to Virginia's body.]

L. Vir. [Weeping.] My old heart splits with sorrow!
Sweet hapless flow'r!

Untimely cropt by the fell planter's hand!
My eyes weep blood to look on what I've done —
And yet 'twas pity nerv'd my arm to strike
The blow!

Icil. Distraction seize thee! — then strike here!
Give me thy pity too!

L. Vir. Icilius, hear me —

Look on the cold remains of that dear maid —
She sleeps in peace and honour! — Wouldst thou rather
Behold her thus, or stain'd with foul pollution?
— Now, as thou art a Roman,
Declare —

Icil. Away! — I wish to die, Virginius —

L. Vir. To die? — Are Rome and glory then forgot?
At sight of this hot knife, smoking with blood,
All Rome was fir'd, and aided my old arm
To reach the tyrant's heart! — And shall we now
Give up these glorious hopes? — The Roman name
Again shall rise? Again fair liberty
Smile o'er th' afflicted land! — For such a jewel,
A patriot breast must know no price too dear;
Not ev'n a daughter's blood! — Remember Tarquin,
His exil'd race, and Brutus' guilty sons,
Great Curtius, Coeles, and th' Horatian brothers!
Heroes of old, who for their country bled,
And all th' illustrious list of mighty dead!
Warm'd with their distant rays, let us aspire
To trace their steps, and emulate their fire;

T' extend our fame beyond this narrow span,
And in the Roman to forget the man!

END of the FIFTH ACT.

EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

THE poet's pen, can like a conjurer's wand,
Or kill, or raise his heroine at command;
And I shall, spirit-like, before I sink,
Not courtcously enquire, but tell you what you think.
From top to bottom, I shall make you stare,
By hitting all your judgments to a hair.
And first, with you above, I shall begin---*
Good-natur'd souls, they're ready all to grin.
Though twelve-pence seat you there, so near the cycling,
The folks below can't boast a better feeling.
No high bred prud'ry in your region lurks,
You boldly laugh and cry, as Nature works.
Says John to Tom, (ay---there they sit together,
As honest Britons as e'er trod on leather:)
" 'Tween you and I, my friend, 'tis very wild,
That old Vergeenus should have stuck his child:
I would have bang'd him for't, had I been ruler,
And duck'd that Apus too, by way of cooler."
Some maiden-dames, who hold the middle-floor,
And fly from naughty man at forty four; †
With turn'd-up eyes, applaud Virginia's 'scape,
And vow they'd do the same to shun a rape;
So very chaste, they live in constant fears,
And apprehension strengthens with their years.
Ye bucks, who from the pit your terrors send,
Yet love distressed damsels to befriend;

* Upper Gallery:

† Middle Gallery.

EPILOGUE.

*You think this tragic joke too far was carried;
And wish, to set all right, the maid had married:
You'd rather see (if so the fates had will'd)
Ten wives be kind, than one poor virgin kill'd.
May I approach unto the boxes, pray---
And there search out a judgment on the play?
In vain, alas! I should attempt to find it---
Fine ladies see a play, but never mind it---
'Tis vulgar to be mov'd by acted passion,
Or form opinions, till they're fix'd by fashion.
Our author hopes, this fickle goddess Mode,
With us will make, at least, nine days abode;
To present pleasure he contracts his view,
And leaves his future fame, to time and you.*







J. Roberts del.

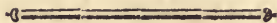
Published for the Strand Theatre Feb 2770.

MR. MASSEY in the Character of CHRISTINA

— don't, you know me Sir?

My Father, look upon me, look my Father!

BELL'S EDITION.



GUSTAVUS VASA,

THE

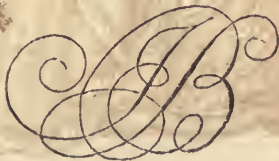
DELIVERER OF HIS COUNTRY.

A TRAGEDY.

Written by HENRY BROOKE, Esq.

AS INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.



LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVIII.



A PREFATORY

DEDICATION

TO THE

SUBSCRIBERS.

AS I esteemed it my happiness to live under a government where national liberty was established by law, and the rights of subjects interwoven with their allegiance, so I ever thought it my safety to act with such allowable freedom, as did not contradict any of our written and known regulations.

Tho' inconsiderable in myself, I am yet a subject of Great-Britain; and the privileges of her meanest member are dear to the whole constitution.

Among those privileges, I claim that of justifying my conduct, I claim that of defending my property, and wish I could do both, without giving disgust, even to those by whose censures I am a sufferer.

When I wrote the following sheets, I had studied the ancient laws of my country, but was not conversant with her present political state. I did not consider things minutely; in the general view, I liked our constitution, and zealously wished that the religion, the laws, and liberties of England might ever be sacred and safe. I had nothing to fear or hope from party or preferment. My attachments were only to truth; I was conscious of no other principles, and was far from apprehending that such could be offensive.

I took my subject from the History of Sweden, one of those Gothic and glorious nations, from whom our form of government is derived, from whom Britain has inherited those unextinguishable sparks of liberty and patriotism, that were her light through the ages of ignorance and superstition, her flaming sword turned every way against invasion, and that vital heat which has so often preserved her, so often restored her, from intestine malignities. Those are the sparks, the gems, that alone give true ornament and brightness to the crown of a British monarch; that give him freely to reign over the free, and shall ever set him above the princes of the earth, till corruption grows universal, till subjects wish to be slaves, and Kings know not how to be happy.

I was pleased with the similitude between the principles, and, as I may say, between the natural constitutions of Sweden and Britain. I looked no further for sentiments, than as they arose from facts; and for the facts I am indebted to history: nay, I ingenuously confess, I was so far from a view of merit with the disaffected, that I looked upon this performance as the highest compliment I could pay the present establishment—Such was my ignorance, or such is my misfortune.

Many are the difficulties a new author has to encounter in introducing his play on the stage. I had the good fortune to surmount them. This piece was about five weeks in rehearsal; the day was appointed for acting; I had disposed of many hundred tickets; and imagined I had nothing to fear, but from the weakness of the performance.

But, then it was, that where I looked for approbation, I met with repulse. I was condemned and punished in my works, without being accused of any crime; and made obnoxious to the government under which I live, without having it in my power to alter my conduct, or knowing in what instance I had given offence.

However singular and unprecedented this treatment may appear, had I conceived it to be the intention of the legislature, I should have submitted without complaining; or had any, among hundreds who have perused the manuscript, observed but a single line that might inadvertently
tend

tend to sedition or immorality, I would then have been the first to strike it out; I would now be the last to publish it.

Had the dignity of the Lord Chamberlain's office condescended, as some would insinuate, to a theatrical examination of the drama, to a critical inquisition of the conduct, the unities, and tricks of scenery, even so I might have hoped for equal indulgence with farces, pantomimes, and other performances of like taste and genius.

But this is not the case; the Lord Chamberlain's office is alone concerned in those reasons which gave birth to the statute; it is to guard against such representations as he may conceive to be of pernicious influence in the commonwealth; this is the only point to which his prohibitions are understood to extend, and his prohibition lays me under the necessity of publishing this piece, to convince the public, that (though of no valuable consequence) I am at least inoffensive.

Patriotism, or the love of country, is the great and single moral which I had in view through this play. This love (so superior in its nature to all other interests and affections) is personated in the character of Gustavus. It is the love of national welfare; national welfare is national liberty; and he alone that can be conscious of it, he alone can contribute to the support of it, who is personally free.

By personal freedom I mean that state resulting from virtue, or reason ruling in the breast, superior to appetite and passion; and by national freedom, I mean a security (arising from the nature of a well-ordered constitution) for those advantages and privileges that each man has a right to, by contributing as a member to the weal of that community.

The monarch, or head of such a constitution, is as the father of a large and well-regulated family; his subjects are not servants, but sons; their care, their affections, their attachments are reciprocal, and their interest is one, is not to be divided.

This is truly to reign; this only is to reign. How glorious, how extensive, is the prerogative of such a monarch! He is superior to subjects, each of whom is equal to any monarch, who is only superior to slaves. He is sceptered in the hearts of his people, from whence he di-

rects their hands with double force and energy. His office partakes of the divine inclination, by being exerted to no other end but the happiness of a people.

Oh, never may any subtleties, any insinuations, raise groundless jealousies in a people so governed! never may they be influenced to imagine that such a prince is invading their rights, while he is only solicitous to confirm and preserve them!

And never may any ministry, any adulation, seduce such a prince from that his true interest and honour!

I should not have had the assurance to solicit a subscription in favour of sentiments that any circumstance could ever make me retract. These, and these only, are the principles of which you are patrons; and the honourable names prefixed * to this performance, lay me under such a future obligation of conduct, as shall ever make me cautious of forfeiting the advantages I receive from them. They are also to me a lasting memorial of that gratitude with which I am,

Your most obliged, most faithful,

And most humble servant,

HENRY BROOKE.

* The author was favoured with a very numerous and respectable subscription.

P R O L O G U E.

BRITONS! this night presents a state distress'd,
 Tho' brave, yet vanquish'd; and tho' great, oppress'd;
 Vice, rav'ning vulture, on her vitals prey'd,
 Her peers, her prelates, fell corruption sway'd;
 Their rights, for pow'r, th' ambitious weakly sold,
 The wealthy, poorly, for superfluous gold.
 Hence wasting ills, hence sev'ring factions rose,
 And gave large entrance to invading foes;
 Truth, justice, honour fled th' infected shore,
 For freedom, sacred freedom, was no more.

Then, greatly rising in his country's right,
 Her hero, her deliverer, sprung to light;
 A race of hardy, northern sons he led,
 Guiltless of courts, untainted, and unread,
 Whose inborn spirit spurn'd th' ignoble fee,
 Whose hands scorn'd bondage, for their hearts were free.

Ask ye what law their conqu'ring cause confess'd?
 Great nature's law, the law within the breast;
 Form'd by no art, and to no sect confin'd,
 But stamp'd by Heav'n upon th' unletter'd mind.

Such, such, of old, the first-born natives were,
 Who breath'd the virtues of Britannia's air;
 Their realm, when mighty Cæsar vainly sought,
 For mightier freedom against Cæsar fought,
 And rudely drove the fam'd invader home,
 To tyrannize o'er polish'd—venal Rome.

Our bard, exalted in a free-born flame,
 To ev'ry nation would transfer this claim:
 He to no state, no climate bounds his page,
 He bids the moral beam thro' ev'ry age;
 Then be your judgment gen'rous as his plan,
 Ye sons of freedom!—save the friend of man.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

<i>Cristiern</i> , King of Denmark and Norway, and Usurper of Sweden,	Mr. Wright.
<i>Trollio</i> , a Swede, Archbishop of Upsal, and Vicegerent to <i>Cristiern</i> ,	Mr. Cibber.
<i>Peterfon</i> , a Swedish nobleman, secretly of the Danish party, and friend to <i>Trollio</i> ,	Mr. Turbutt.
<i>Laertes</i> , a young Danish Nobleman, attendant to <i>Cristina</i> ,	Mr. Woodward.
<i>Gustavus</i> , formerly General of the Swedes, and first cousin to the deceased King,	Mr. Quin.
<i>Arvida</i> , of the royal blood of Sweden, friend and cousin to <i>Gustavus</i> ,	Mr. Milward.
<i>Anderson</i> , Chief Lord of Dalecarlia,	Mr. Mills.
<i>Arnoldus</i> , a Swedish Priest, and chaplain in the copper mines of Dalecarlia,	Mr. Havard.
<i>Sivard</i> , Captain of the Dalecarlians,	Mr. Ridout.

W O M E N.

<i>Cristina</i> , daughter to <i>Cristiern</i> ,	Mrs. Giffard.
<i>Augusta</i> , Mother to } Prisoners in } <i>Gustavus</i> , } <i>Cristiern's</i> } <i>Gustava</i> , Sister to } camp, }	Mrs. Butler.
<i>Mariana</i> , attendant and confident to <i>Gustavus</i> , a child,	Miss Cole.
<i>Cristina</i> ,	Mrs. Chetwood.

Soldiers, Peasants, Messengers, and Attendants.

SCENE, Dalecarlia, a northern province in Sweden,

GUSTAVUS VASA.

A C T I.

SCENE, *the inside of the Copper-Mines in Dalecarlia.**Enter Anderfon, Arnoldus, and Servants, with torches.*

ANDERSON.

YOU tell me wonders.

Arn. Soft, behold, my Lord,*[Points behind the scenes.]*

Behold him stretch'd, where reigns eternal night,
 'The flint his pillow, and cold damps his sov'ring;
 Yet, bold of spirit, and robust of limb,
 He throws inclemency aside, nor feels
 The lot of human frailty.

And. What horrors hang around! the savage race
 Ne'er hold their den but where some glimm'ring ray
 May bring the cheer of morn—What then is he?
 His dwelling marks a secret in his soul,
 And whispers somewhat more than man about him.

Arn. Draw but the veil of his apparent wretchedness,
 And you shall find his form is but assum'd,
 To hoard some wond'rous treasure lodg'd within.

And. Let him bear up to what thy praises speak him,
 And I will win him, spite of his reserve,
 Bind him with sacred friendship to my soul,
 And make him half myself.

Arn. 'Tis nobly promis'd;
 For worth is rare, and wants a friend in Sweden:
 And yet I tell thee, in her age of heroes,
 When nurs'd by freedom, all her sons grew great,
 And ev'ry peasant was a prince in virtue.
 I greatly err, or this abandon'd stranger
 Had stepp'd the first for fame, tho' now he seeks
 To veil his name, and cloud his shine of virtues;
 For there is danger in them.

And.

And. True, Arnoldus.

Were there a prince throughout the scepter'd globe,
Who search'd out merit for its due preferment,
With half that care our tyrant seeks it out
For ruin, happy, happy were that state,
Beyond the golden fable of those pure
And earliest ages——Wherefore this, good Heav'n?
Is it of fate, that who assumes a crown
Throws off humanity?

Arn. So Cristiern holds.

He claims our country as by right of conquest,
A right to ev'ry wrong. Ev'n now 'tis said,
The tyrant envies what our mountains yield
Of health or aliment; he comes upon us,
Attended by a num'rous host, to seize
These last retreats of our expiring liberty.

And. Say'st thou?

Arn. This rising day, this instant hour,
Thus chased, we stand upon the utmost brink
Of steep perdition, and must leap the precipice,
Or turn upon our hunters.

And. Now, Gustavus!

Thou prop and glory of inglorious Sweden,
Where art thou, mightiest man?—Were he but here—
I'll tell thee, my Arnoldus, I beheld him,
Then when he first drew sword, serene and dreadful,
As the brow'd evening ere the thunder break;
For soon he made it toilsome to our eyes
To mark his speed, and trace the paths of conquest?
In vain we follow'd where he swept the field;
'Twas death alone could wait upon Gustavus.

Arn. He was indeed whate'er our wish could form him.

And. Array'd and beauteous in the blood of Danes,
Th' invaders of his country, thrice he chased
This Cristiern, this fell conqu'ror, this usurper,
With rout and foul dishonour at his heels,
To plunge his head in Denmark.

Arn. Nor ever had the tyrant known return,
To tread our necks, and blend us with the dust,
Had he not dar'd to break thro' ev'ry law
That sanctifies the nations; seiz'd our hero,

The pledge of specious treaty, tore him from us,
And led him chain'd to Denmark.

And. Then we fell.

If still he lives, we yet may learn to rise ;
But never can I dare to rest a hope
On any arm but his.

Arn. And yet, I trust,

This stranger, that delights to dwell with darkness,
Unknown, unfriended, compass'd round with wretched-
Conceals some mighty purpose in his breast, [ness,
Now lab'ring into birth.

And. When came he hither ?

Arn. Six moons have chang'd upon the face of night,
Since here he first arriv'd, in servile weeds,
But yet of mien majestic. I observ'd him,
And ever as I gaz'd, some nameless charm,
A wond'rous greatness, not to be conceal'd,
Broke thro' his form, and aw'd my soul before him,
Amid these mines he earns the hireling's portion,
His hands out-toil the hind, while on his brow
Sits patience, bathed in the laborious drop
Of painful industry——I oft have sought,
With friendly tender of some worthier service,
To win him from his temper ; but he shuns
All offers, yet declin'd with graceful act,
Engaging beyond utt'rance. And at eve,
When all retire to some domestic solace,
He only stays, and, as you see, the earth
Receives him to her dark and cheerless bosom,

And. Has no unwary moment e'er betray'd
The labours of his soul, some fav'rite grief,
Whereon to raise conjecture ?

Arn. I saw, as some bold peasants late deplor'd
Their country's bondage, sudden passion seiz'd
And bore him from his seeming ; straight his form
Was turn'd to terror, ruin fill'd his eye,
And his proud step appear'd to awe the world ;
When check'd, as thro' an impotence of rage,
Damp sadness soon usurp'd upon his brow,
And the big tear roll'd graceful down his visage.

And. Your words imply a man of much importance.

Arn. So I suspected, and at dead of night

Stole on his slumbers ; his full heart was busy,
 And oft his tongue pronounc'd the hated name
 Of—bloody Cristiern——There he seem'd to pause,
 And, recollected to one voice, he cry'd,
 Oh, Sweden ! Oh, my country ! Yet I'll save thee.

And. Forbear ; he rises——Heav'ns, what majesty !

Enter Gustavus.

Your pardon, stranger, if the voice of virtue,
 If cordial amity from man to man,
 And somewhat that should whisper to the soul,
 To seek and cheer the suff'rer, led me hither,
 Impatient to salute thee. Be it thine
 Alone to point the path of friendship out,
 And my best pow'r shall wait upon thy fortunes.

Guf. Yes, gen'rous man ! there is a wond'rous test,
 The truest, worthiest, noblest cause for friendship ;
 Dearer than life, than int'rest, or alliance.
 And equal to your virtues.

And. Say, unfold.

Guf. Art thou a foldier, a chief lord in Sweden,
 And yet a stranger to thy country's voice,
 That loudly calls the hidden patriot forth ?
 But what's a foldier ? What's a lord in Sweden ?
 All worth is fled or fall'n ; nor has a life
 Been spar'd, but for dishonour ; spar'd to breed
 More slaves for Denmark, to beget a race
 Of new-born virgins for th' unfated lust
 Of our new masters. Sweden, thou art no more !
 Queen of the north ! thy land of liberty,
 Thy house of heroes, and thy seat of virtues,
 Is now the tomb where thy brave sons lie speechless,
 And foreign snakes engender.

And. Oh, 'tis true !

But wherefore ? To what purpose ?

Guf. Think of Stockholm.

When Cristiern seiz'd upon the hour of peace,
 And drench'd the hospitable floor with blood,
 Then fell the flow'r of Sweden, mighty names !
 Her hoary senators, and gasping patriots.
 The tyrant spoke, and his licentious band
 Of blood-train'd ministry were loos'd to ruin.
 Invention wanton'd in the toil of infants

Stabb'd on the breast, or reeking on the points
 Of sportive javelins. Husbands, sons, and fires,
 With dying ears drank in the loud despair
 Of shrieking chastity. The waste of war
 Was peace and friendship to this civil massacre.
 Oh, heav'n and earth! Is there a cause for this?
 For sin without temptation, calm, cool villainy,
 Delib'rate mischief, unimpassion'd lust,
 And smiling murder? Lie thou there, my soul:
 Sleep, sleep upon it, image not the form
 Of any dream but this, till time grows pregnant,
 And thou canst wake to vengeance. [forth.

And. Thou'lt greatly mov'd me. Ha! thy tears start
 Yes, let them flow, our country's fate demands them;
 I too will mingle mine, while yet 'tis left us
 To weep in secret, and to fight with safety.
 But wherefore talk of vengeance? 'Tis a word
 Should be engraven on the new-fall'n snow,
 Where the first beam may melt it from observance.
 Vengeance on Crisstiern! Norway and the Dane,
 The sons of Sweden, all the peopled north,
 Bends at his nod — My humbler boast of pow'r
 Meant not to cope with crowns.

Gus. Then what remains
 Is briefly this; your friendship has my thanks,
 But must not my acceptance. Never — no —
 First sink, thou baleful mansion, to the centre,
 And be thy darkness doubled round my head,
 Ere I forsake thee for the bliss of Paradise,
 To be enjoy'd beneath a tyrant's sceptre:
 No, that were wilful slavery — Freedom is
 The brilliant gift of Heav'n, 'tis reason's self,
 The kin of Deity — I will not part it.

And. Nor I, while I can hold it; but, alas!
 That is not in our choice.

Gus. Why? Where's that pow'r whose engines are of
 To bend the brave and virtuous man to slavery? [force
 Base fear, the laziness of lust, gross appetites,
 These are the ladders, and the groveling foot-stool,
 From whence the tyrant rises on our wrongs,
 Secure and scepter'd in the soul's servility.
 He has debauch'd the genius of our country,

And rides triumphant, while her captive sons
Await his nod, the filken slaves of pleasure,
Or fetter'd in their fears.

And. I apprehend you.

No doubt, a base submission to our wrongs
May well be term'd a voluntary bondage:
But think the heavy hand of pow'r is on us;
Of pow'r, from whose imprisonment and chains
Not all our free-born virtue can protect us.

Guf. 'Tis there you err; for I have felt their force;
And had I yielded to enlarge these limbs,
Or share the tyrant's empire, on the terms
Which he propos'd, I were a slave indeed.
No, in the deep and deadly damp of dungeons,
The soul can rear her sceptre, smile in anguish,
And triumph o'er oppression.

And. Oh, glorious spirit! Think not I am slack
To relish what thy noble scope intends;
But then the means, the peril, and the consequence!
Great are the odds, and who shall dare the trial?

Guf. I dare.

Oh, wert thou still that gallant chief
Whom once I knew! I could unfold a purpose,
Would make the greatness of thy heart to swell,
And burst in the conception.

And. Give it utterance.

Perhaps there lie some embers yet in Sweden,
Which, waken'd by thy breath, might rise in flames,
And spread vindictive round. You say you know me;
But give a tongue to such a cause as this,
And if you hold me tardy in the call,
You know me not. But thee I've surely known;
For there is somewhat in that voice and form,
Which has alarm'd my soul to recollection:
But 'tis as in a dream, and mocks my reach.

Guf. Then name the man whom it is death to know,
Or, knowing, to conceal—and I am he.

And. Gustavus! Heav'ns! 'Tis he! 'tis he himself!

Enter Arvida, speaking to a Servant.

Arv. I thank you, friend; he's here; you may retire.

[Exit Servant.

And.

And. Good morning to my noble guest; you're early.

[*Gustavus walks apart.*]

Arv. I come to take a short and hasty leave.

'Tis said, that from the mountain's neighb'ring brow
The canvas of a thousand tents appears,
Whitening the vale—Suppose the tyrant there;
You know my safety lies not in the interview—
Ha! what is he, who, in the shreds of slavery
Supports a step superior to the state
And insolence of ermine?

Guf. Sure that voice

Was once the voice of friendship and Arvida!

Arv. Ha! Yes, 'tis he!—ye pow'rs, it is Gustavus!

Guf. Thou brother of adoption! In the bond
Of ev'ry virtue wedded to my soul,
Enter my heart; it is thy property.

Arv. I'm lost in joy, and wond'rous circumstance.

Guf. Yet, wheretore, my Arvida, wherefore is it,
That in a place, and at a time like this,
We should thus meet? Can Crittiern cease from cruelty?
Say, whence is this, my brother? How escap'd you?
Did I not leave thee in the Danish dungeon?

Arv. Of that hereafter. Let me view thee first.

How graceful is the garb of wretchedness,
When worn by virtue! Fashions turn to folly;
Their colours tarnish, and their pomps grow poor
To her magnificence.

Guf. Yes, my Arvida;

Beyond the sweeping of the proudest train
That shades a monarch's heel, I prize these weeds;
For they are sacred to my country's freedom.
A mighty enterprize has been conceiv'd,
And thou art come auspicious to the birth,
As sent to fix the seal of heav'n upon it.

Arv. Point but thy purpose—let it be to bleed—

Guf. Your hands, my friends.

All. Our hearts.

Guf. I know they're brave.

Of such the time has need, of hearts like yours,
Faithful and firm, of hands inur'd and strong;
For we must ride upon the neck of danger,
And plunge into a purpose big with death.

And. Here let us kneel, and bind us to thy side.
By all——

Guf. No, hold—if we want oaths to join us,
Swift let us part, from pole to pole afunder.
A cause like ours is its own sacrament;
Truth, justice, reason, love, and liberty,
Th' eternal links that clasp the world, are in it;
And he who breaks their sanction, breaks all law,
And infinite connection.

Arn. True, my Lord.

And. And such the force I feel.

Arn. And I.

Arn. And all.

Guf. Know then, that ere our royal Stenon fell,
While this my valiant cousin and myself,
By chains and treach'ry lay detain'd in Denmark,
Upon a dark and unsuspected hour,
The bloody Cristiern fought to take my head.
Thanks to the ruling Pow'r, within whose eye
Imbosom'd ills, and mighty treasons roll,
Prevented of their blackness—I escap'd,
Led by a gen'rous arm, and some time lay
Conceal'd in Denmark; for my forfeit head
Became the price of crowns. Each port and path
Was shut against my passage; till I heard
That Stenon, valiant Stenon fell in battle,
And freedom was no more. Oh, then what bounds
Had pow'r to hem the desp'rate? I o'erpass'd them,
Travers'd all Sweden, thro' ten thousand foes,
Impending perils, and surrounding tongues,
That from himself enquir'd Gustavus out.
Witness, my country, how I toil'd to wake
Thy sons to liberty—In vain; for fear,
Cold fear, had seiz'd on all—Here last I came,
And shut me from the sun, whose hateful beams
Serv'd but to shew the ruins of my country.
When here, my friends, 'twas here, at length, I found,
What I had left to look for, gallant spirits,
In the rough form of untaught peasantry.

And. Indeed they once were brave; our Dalecarlians
Have oft been known to give a law to kings;
And as their only wealth has been their liberty,

From all th' unmeasur'd graspings of ambition
Have held that gem untouch'd—tho' now 'tis fear'd—

Guf. It is not fear'd—I say, they still shall hold it.
I've search'd these men, and find them like the soil,
Barren without, and to the eye unlovely,
But they've their mines within; and this the day
In which I mean to prove them.

Arn. Oh, Gustavus!

Most aptly hast thou caught the passing hour
Upon whose critical and fated hinge
The state of Sweden turns.

Guf. And to this hour

I've therefore held me in this darksome womb,
That sends me forth as to a second birth
Of freedom, or thro' death to reach eternity.
This day, return'd with ev'ry circling year,
In thousands pours the mountain peasants forth,
Each with his batter'd arms and rusty helm,
In sportive discipline well train'd, and prompt
Against the day of peril. Thus disguis'd,
Already have I stirr'd their latent sparks
Of slumb'ring virtue, apt as I could wish,
To warm before the lightest breath of liberty.

Arn. How will they kindle, when, confess'd to view,
Once more their lov'd Gustavus stands before them,
And pours his blaze of virtues on their souls!

Arn. It cannot fail.

And. It has a glorious aspect.

Arn. Now, Sweden, rise and re-assert thy rights,
Or be for ever fall'n.

And. Then be it so.

Arn. Lead on, thou arm of war,
To death or victory.

Guf. Let us embrace.

Why, thus, my friends, thus join'd in such a cause
Are we not equal to a host of slaves?
You say the foe's at hand—Why, let them come;
Steep are our hills, nor easy of access,
And few the hours we ask for their reception;
For I will take these rustic sons of liberty
In the first warmth and hurry of their souls;
And should the tyrant then attempt our heights,

He comes upon his fate—Arise, thou sun!
Haste, haste to rouse thee to the call of liberty,
That shall once more salute thy morning beam,
And hail thee to thy setting.

Arn. O blest voice!

Prolong that note but one short day thro' Sweden,
And tho' the sun and life should set together,
It matters not—we shall have liv'd that day.

Arn. Were it not worth the hazard of a life
To know if Cristiern leads his pow'rs in person,
And what his scope intends? Be mine that task,
Ev'n to the tyrant's tent I'll win my way,
And mingle with his councils.

Gust. Go, my friend.

Dear as thou art, whene'er our country calls,
Friends, sons, and fires should yield their treasure up,
Nor own a sense beyond the publick safety.

But tell me, my Arvida, 'ere thou goest,
Tell me what hand has made thy friend its debtor,
And giv'n thee up to freedom and Gustavus?

Arn. Ha! let me think of that, 'tis sure she loves him.

[*Aside.*]

Away thou skance and jaundice eye of jealousy,
That tempts my soul to sicken at perfection;
Away! I will unfold it——To thyself
Arvida owes his freedom.

Gust. How, my friend?

[dungeon

Arn. Some months are pass'd since in the Danish
With care emaciate, and unwholesome damps
Sick'ning I lay, chain'd to my flinty bed,
And call'd on death to ease me——strait a light
Shone round, as when the ministry of heav'n
Descends to kneeling saints. But Oh! the form
That pour'd upon my sight——Ye angels speak!
For ye alone are like her; or present
Such visions pictur'd to the mighty eye
Of fancy trans'd in bliss. She then approach'd,
The softest pattern of embodied meekness,
For pity had divinely touch'd her eye,
And harmoniz'd her motions——Ah, she cry'd,
Unhappy stranger, art not thou the man
Whose virtues have endear'd thee to Gustavus?

Gust.

Gust. Gustavus did she say?

Arv. Yes, yes, her lips

Breath'd forth that name with a peculiar sweetness.
Loos'd from my bonds, I rose, at her command,
When, scarce recov'ring speech, I would have kneel'd,
But haste thee, haste thee for thy life, she cry'd;
And O, if e'er thy envied eyes behold
Thy lov'd Gustavus; say, a gentle foe
Has giv'n thee to his friendship.

Gust. You've much amaz'd me! Is her name a secret?

Arv. To me it is——but you perhaps may guess.

Gust. No, on my word.

Arv. You too had your deliv'rer.

Gust. A kind, but not a fair one—Well, my friends!
Our cause is ripe, and calls us forth to action.
Tread ye not lighter? Swells not ev'ry breast
With ampler scope to take your country in,
And breath the cause of virtue? Rise, ye Swedes!
Rise greatly equal to this hour's importance.
On us the eyes of future ages wait,
And this day's arm strikes forth decisive fate;
This day, that shall for ever sink——or save;
And make each Swede a monarch——or a slave.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE *The Camp.*

Enter Crisiern, Attendants, &c. Trollio meets him.

TROLLIO.

ALL hail, most mighty of the thrones of Europe!
The morn salutes thee with auspicious brightness,
No vapour frowns prophetic on her brow,
But the clear sun, who travels with thy arms,
Still smiles, attendant on thy growing greatness:
His evening eye shall see thee peaceful lord
Of all the north, of utmost Scandinavia;

Whence

G U S T A V U S V A S A .

Whence thou may'st pour thy conquests o'er the earth,
'Till farthest India glows beneath thy empire,
And Lybia knows no regal name but yours.

Crist. Yes, Trollio, I confess the godlike thirst,
Ambition, that wou'd drink a sea of glory.
But what from Dalecarlia ?

Troll. Late last night,
I sent a trusty slave to Peterfon,
And hourly wait some tidings.

Crist. Think you ?—Sure
The wretches will not dare such quick perdition.

Troll. I think they will not—Tho' of old I know them
All born to broils, the very sons of tumult ;
Waste is their wealth, and mutiny their birthright,
And this the yearly fever of their blood,
Their holiday of war ; a day apart,
Torn out from peace, and sacred to rebellion.
Oft has their battle hung upon the brow
Of yon wild steep, a living cloud of mischiefs,
Pregnant with plagues, and empty'd on the heads
Of many a monarch.

Crist. Monarchs they were not,
Pageants of wax, the mouldings of the populace,
Tame, poultry idols, scepter'd up for shew,
And garnish'd into royalty—No, Tröllio,
Kings should be felt if they wou'd find obedience ;
The beast has sense enough to know his rider :
When the knee trembles, and the hand grows slack,
He casts for liberty ; but bends and turns
For him that leaps with boldness on his back,
And spurs him to the bit.

*Enter a Gentleman Usher, and several Peasants, who kneel
and bow at a distance.*

Crist. What slaves are those ?

Gent. My gracious liege, your subjects.

Crist. Whence ?

Gent. Of Sweden,

From Angermannia, from Helsingia some,
Some from Gemtian and Nerician provinces.

Crist. Their business.

Gent.

Gent. They come to speak their griefs.

Crist. Their griefs! their insolence!

Is not the camel mute beneath his burden?

Were they not born to bear? Away!—Hold! come,

What wou'd these murmurers?

Gent. Most royal Cristiern,

They say they have but one—one gracious King,

And yet are bow'd beneath a host of tyrants,

Talk-masters, soldiers, gatherers of subsidies,

All officers of rapine, rape, and murder;

Will-doing potentates, the lords of licence,

Who weigh their sweat and blood, and heavier shame,

Ev'n as a feather puff'd away in sport,

The pastime of a gale.

Crist. I'll hear no more,

I know ye, well I know ye, ye base supplicants;

Fear is the only worship of your souls,

And ever where ye hate, ye yield obeysance.

Wretches! Shall I go poring on the earth,

Lest my imperial foot should tread on emmets?

Is it for you I must controul my soldier,

And coop my eagles from their carrion? No—

Are ye not commoners, vile things in nature,

Poor priceless peasants? slaves can know no property!

Out of my sight!

[*Exeunt Peasants.*]

Enter Arvida guarded, and a Gentleman.

Arv. Now, fate, I'm caught, and what remains is ob-

Gent. A prisoner, good my lord.

[*vious.*]

Crist. When taken?

Gent. Now, ev'n here, before your tent;

I mark'd his careless action, but his eye

Of studied observation—then his port

And base attire ill suiting—I enquir'd,

But found he was a stranger.

Crist. Ha! observe.

(Damn'd affectation) what a fullen scorn

Knits up his brow, and frowns upon our presence.

What—ay—thou wou'dst be thought a mystery,

Some greatness in eclipse—Whence art thou, slave?

Silent! Nay, then—Bring forth the torture there—

A smile! Damnation!—How the wretch assumes

The wreck of state, the suff'ring soul of majesty.

What

What have we no pre-eminence, no claim?
Dost thou not know thy life is in our pow'r?

Arv. 'Tis therefore I despise it.

Crist. Matchless insolence!

What art thou? Speak!

Arv. Be sure no friend to thee;

For I'm a foe to tyrants.

Crist. Fiends and fire!—

A whirlwind tear thee, most audacious traitor. [*Cristiern.*

Arv. Do, rage and chafe, thy wrath's beneath me;
How poor thy pow'r, how empty is thy happiness,
When such a wretch, as I appear to be,
Can ride thy temper, harrow up thy form,
And stretch thy soul upon the rack of passion. [hence!

Crist. I'll know thee—I will know thee! Bear him
Why, what are Kings, if slaves can brave us thus?
Go, Trollio, hold him to the rack—Tear, search him,
Prove him thro' ev'ry poignance, sting him deep.

[*Exit Trollio with Arvida guarded.*

Enter a Messenger as in haste.

Crist. What wou'd'st thou, fellow?

Mess. O my sovereign lord,

I am come fast and far, from ev'n 'till morn,
Five times I've cross'd the shade of sleepless night
Impatient of thy presence.

Crist. Whence?

Mess. From Denmark;

Commended from the consort of thy throne
To speed and privacy.

[*Speak out,*

Crist. Your words wou'd taste of terror,—Wretch,
Nor dare to tremble here—for didst thou bear
Thy tidings from a thousand leagues around,
Unmov'd, I move the whole, the cent'ring nave,
Where turns that mighty circle—Speak thy message.

Mess. A secret malady, my gracious liege,
Some factious vapour, risen from off the skirts
Of southmost Norway, has diffus'd its bane,
And rages now within the heart of Denmark.

Crist. It must not, cannot, 'tis impossible!
What, my own Danes? Nay, then the world wants weed—
I will not bear it—Hell! I'd rather see, [ing.
This earth a desert, desolate and wild,

And

And like the lion stalk my lonely round,
Famish'd and roaring for my prey.—Call Trollio,
I'll have men studied, deeply read in mischiefs.

Enter a Servant, who kneels and delivers a letter.

Crist. From whom?

Serv. From Peterfon.

Crist. To Trollio——Right.

[*Reads.*

How's this?——Be gone——

Go all——without there——wait my pleasure.

O curse! How hell has tim'd its plagues!

Enter Trollio.

Crist. Come near, my Trollio.

We've heard ill news from Denmark——that's a trifle——

But here's to blast thy eyes——Read——

Troll. Ha! Gustavus!

So near us, and in arms!

[*time*

Crist. What's to be done? Now, Trollio, now's the

To subtilize thy soul, sound every depth,
And waken all the wond'rous statesman in thee.

For I must tell thee (spite of pride and royalty,
Of guarding armies, and of circling nations
That bend beneath my nod) this curs'd Gustavus

Invades my shrinking spirits, awes my heart,
And sits upon my slumbers——All in vain

Has he been daring, and have I been vigilant;

Spite of himself he still evades the hunter,
And if there's pow'r in heav'n or hell it guards him.

When was I vanquish'd, but when he oppos'd me?

When have I conquer'd, but when he was absent?

His name's a host, a terror to my legions.

And by my tripled crown, I swear, Gustavus,

I'd rather meet all Europe for my foe,

Than see thy face in arms!

Troll. Be calm, my liege;

And listen to a secret big with consequence,

That gives thee back the second man on earth

Whose valour cou'd plant fears around thy throne;

Thy pris'ner——

Crist. What of him?

Troll. The prince Arvida.

Crist. How!

Troll.

Troll. The same.

Crist. My royal fugitive?

Troll. Most certain.

Crist. Now then 'tis plain who sent him hither.

Troll. Yes.

[me—

Pray give me leave, my Lord——a thought comes cross
If so he must be ours——

[*Pauses.*

Your pardon for a question——Has Arvida
E'er seen your beauteous daughter, your Cristina?

Crist. Never—yes—possibly he might, that day
When the proud pair, Gustavus and Arvida,
Thro' Copenhagen drew a length of chain,
And grac'd my chariot wheels—but why the question?

Troll. I'll tell you—while e'en now he stood before us
I mark'd his high demeanour, and my eye
Claim'd some remembrance of him, tho' in clouds
Doubtful and distant, but a nearer view
Renew'd the characters effac'd by absence,
Yet, lest he might presume upon a friendship
Of ancient league between us, I dissembled,
Nor seem'd to know him———On he proudly strode,
As who should say, Back, fortune, know thy distance!
'Thus steadily he pass'd, and mock'd his fate.
When, lo! the Princess to her morning walk
Came forth attended———quick amazement seiz'd
Arvida at the sight; his steps took root,
A tremor shook him; and his alt'ring cheek
Now sudden flush'd, then fled its wonted colour;
While with an eager and intemp'rate look
He bent his form, and hung upon her beauties.

Crist. Ha! Did our daughter note him?

Troll. No, my Lord;

She pass'd regardless———Strait his pride fell from him,
And at her name he started.

'Then heav'd a sigh, and cast a look to heav'n,
Of such a mute, yet eloquent emotion,
As seem'd to say, Now, fate, thou hast prevail'd,
And found one way to triumph o'er Arvida!

Crist. But whither wou'd this lead?

Troll. List, list, my Lord!

While thus his soul's unseated, shook by passion,
Cou'd we engage him to betray Gustavus———

Crist. O empty hope! Impossible, my Trollio,
Do I not know him, and the curs'd Gustavus?
Both fix'd in resolution deep as hell,
And proud as high Olympus!

Troll. Ah, my liege,
No mortal footing treads so firm in virtue,
As always to abide the slipp'ry path,
Nor deviate with the bias——Some have few,
But each man has his failing, some defect
Wherein to slide temptation——Leave him to me.

Crist. I know thou hast a serpentizing genius,
Canst wind the subtlest mazes of the soul,
And trace her wand'rings to the source of action.
If thou canst bend this proud one to our purpose,
And make the lion crouch, 'tis well——if not,
Away at once, and sweep him from remembrance.

Troll. Then I must promise deep.

Crist. Ay, any thing; out-bid ambition.

Troll. Love?

[him:

Crist. Ha! Yes—our daughter too—if she can bribe
But then to win him to betray his friend?

Troll. O doubt it not, my Lord—for if he loves,
As sure he greatly does, I have a stratagem
That holds the certainty of fate within it.
Love is a passion whose effects are various,
It ever brings some change upon the soul,
Some virtue, or some vice, 'till then unknown,
Degrades the hero, and makes cowards valiant.

Crist. True, when it pours upon a youthful temper,
Open and apt to take the torrent in;
It owns no limits, no restraint it knows,
But sweeps all down tho' heav'n and hell oppose;
Ev'n virtue rears in vain her sacred mound,
Raz'd in its rage, or in its swellings drown'd. [Exeunt:

SCENE opens and discovers Arvida in chains, guards preparing instruments of death and torture. He advances in confusion.

Arv. Off, off, vain cunbrance, ye conflicting thoughts!
Leave me to heav'n. O peace!—It will not be——
Just when I rose above mortality,
'To pour her wond'rous weight of charms upon me!

At such a time, it was, it was too much !
 To pluck the soaring pinion of my soul,
 While eagle-ey'd she held her flight to heav'n,
 O'er pain and death triumphant ! Help, ye saints,
 Angelic ministers, descend, descend !
 And lift me to myself ; hold, bind my heart
 Firm and unshaken in th' approaching ruin,
 The wreck of earth-born frailty ! and, O heav'n !
 For ev'ry pang these tortur'd limbs shall feel,
 Descend in ten-fold blessings on Gustavus !
 Yes, bless him, bless him ! Crown his hours with joy,
 His head with glory, and his arms with conquest ;
 Set his firm foot upon the neck of tyrants,
 And be his name the balm of every lip
 That breathes thro' Sweden ! Worthiest to be stil'd
 Their friend, their chief, their father, and their king !

Enter Trollio.

Troll. Unbind your prisoner.

Arv. How ?

Troll. You have your liberty,
 And may depart unquestion'd.

Arv. Do not mock me.

It is not to be thought, while pow'r remains,
 That Cristiern wants a reason to be cruel.
 But let him know I wou'd not be oblig'd.
 He who accepts the favours of a tyrant
 Shares in his guilt ; they leave a stain behind them.

Troll. You wrong the native temper of his soul ;
 Cruel of force, but never of election :
 Prudence compell'd him to a shew of tyranny ;
 Howe'er those politricks are now no more,
 And mercy in her turn shall shine on Sweden.

Arv. Indeed ! It were a strange, a bless'd reverse,
 Devoutly to be wish'd, but then the cause,
 The cause, my Lord, must surely be uncommon.
 May I presume ?
 Perhaps a secret.

Troll. No——or if it were,
 The boldness of thy spirit claims respect,
 And should be answer'd. Know, the only man,
 In whom our monarch ever knew repulse,

Is now our friend ; that terror of the field,
Th' invincible Gustavus.

Arv. Ha ! friend to Cristiern ? Guard thyself, my heart !

[*Aside.*

Nor seem to take alarm——Why, good my Lord,
What terror is there in a wretch proscib'd,
Naked of means, and distant as Gustavus ?

Troll. There you mistake——Nor knew we till this hour
The danger was so near——From yonder hill
He sends proposals, back'd with all the pow'rs
Of Dalecarlia, those licentious resolute,
Who, having nought to hazard in the wreck,
Are ever foremost to foment a storm.

Arv. I were too bold to question on the terms.

Troll. No——trust me, valiant man, whoe'er thou art,
I wou'd do much to win a worth like thine,
By any act of service, or of confidence.
The terms Gustavus claims, indeed, are haughty ;
The freedom of his mother and his sister,
His forfeit province, Gothland, and the isles
Submitted to his sceptre —— But the league,
The bond of amity, and lasting friendship,
Is, that he claims Cristina for his bride.
You start, and seem surpriz'd.

Arv. A sudden pain
Just struck athwart my breast —— But say, my Lord,
I thought you nam'd Cristina.

Troll. Yes.

Arv. O torture ?

[*Aside.*

What of her, my good Lord ;

Troll. I said, Gustavus claim'd her for his bride.

Arv. His bride ! his wife !

You did not mean his wife ! Do fiends feel this ? [*Aside.*

Down, heart, nor tell thy anguish ? I'ray excuse me,
Did you not say, the Princess was his wife ?

Whose wife, my Lord ?

Troll. I did not say what was, but what must be.

Arv. Touching Gustavus, was it not ?

Troll. The same.

Arv. His bride !

Troll. I say his bride, his wife ; his lov'd Cristina !
Cristina, fancied in the very prime

And youthful smile of nature; form'd for joys
Unknown to mortals. You seem indispos'd.

Arv. The crime of constitution—Oh, Gustavus! [*Aside.*
This is too much!—And think you then, my Lord—
What, will the royal Cristiern e'er consent
'To match his daughter with his deadliest foe?

Troll. What should he do? War else must be eternal.
Besides, some rumours from his Danish realms
Make peace essential here.

Arv. Yes, peace has sweets,
That Hybla never knew; it sleeps on down,
Cull'd gently from beneath the Cherub's wings;
No bed for mortals—Man is warfare—All
A hurricane within: yet friendship stoops,
And gilds the gloom with falsehood—smiles and varnish!
For still the storm grows high, and then no shore
No rock to split on! 'Twere a kind perdition
'To sink ten thousand fathoms at a plunge,
And fasten on oblivion—there we hold
And all is—

[*Faints.*

Troll. Help, bear him up. O potency of love!
That plucks this noble fabric from his base.
Bend, bend him forward—He revives—How fare you?

Arv. I know not—yet a dagger were most friendly.
Return me, Trollio, O return me back
To death, to racks! Undone, undone Arvida!

Troll. Is't possible, my Lord! the Prince Arvida!
My friend!

[*Embraces him.*

Arv. Confusion to the name!

[*Turns.*

Troll. Why this, good heav'n? And wherefore thus
disguis'd?

Arv. Yes, that accomplish'd traitor, that Gustavus;
While he sat planning private scenes of happiness,
O well dissembled! He, he sent me hither;
My friendly, unsuspecting heart a sacrifice,
To make death sure, and rid him of a rival.

Troll. A rival! Do you then love Cristiern's daughter?

Arv. Name her not, Trollio; since she can't be mine:
Gustavus! how, ah! how hast thou deceiv'd me!
Who could have look'd for falsehood from thy brow?
Whose heav'nly arch was as the throne of virtue,
'Thy eye appear'd a sun to cheer the world,

Thy

Thy bosom truth's fair palace, and thy arms,
Benevolent, the harbour for mankind.

Troll. What's to be done? Believe me, valiant Prince,
I know not which most sways me to thy int'rests,
My love to thee, or hatred to Gustavus. [quickly!

Arv. Wou'd you then save me? Think, contrive!
Lend me your troops—by all the pow'rs of vengeance,
Myself will face this terror of the north,
This son of fame—this—O Gustavus—What?
Where had I wander'd?—Stab my bleeding country!
Save, shield me from that thought.

Troll. Retire, my Lord;
For see, the Princess comes.

Arv. Where, Trollio, where?
Ha! Yes, she comes indeed! her beauties drive
Time, place, and truth, and circumstance before them!
Perdition pleases there—pull—tear me from her!
Yet must I gaze—but one—but one look more,
And I were lost for ever. [Exeunt:

Enter Cristina, Mariana, and Attendants.

Cristina. Forbid it, shame! forbid it, virgin modesty.
No, no, my friend, Gustavus ne'er shall know it.
O I am over-paid with conscious pleasure;
The sense but to have sav'd that wond'rous man,
Is still a smiling cherub in my breast,
And whispers peace within. [quence,

Mar. 'Tis strange a man, of his high note and conse-
Shou'd so evade the busy search of thousands;
That six long months have shut him from enquiry,
And not an eye can trace him to his covert.

Cristina. Once 'twas not so, each infant lis'd, Gustavus!
It was the fav'rite name of ev'ry language,
His slightest motions fill'd the world with tidings;
Wak'd he, or slept, fame watch'd th'important hour,
And nations told it round.

Mar. I've heard, my Princess,
What time Gustavus lay detain'd in Denmark,
Your royal father sought the hero's friendship,
And offer'd ample terms of peace and amity.

Cristina. He did; he offer'd that, my Mariana,
For which contending monarchs su'd in vain,
He offer'd me, his darling, his Cristina;

But I was slighted, slighted by a captive,
Tho' kingdoms swell'd my dower.

Mar. Amazement fix me,
Rejected by Gustavus!

Cristina. Yes, Mariana;—but rejected nobly.
Not worlds cou'd win him to betray his country!
Had he consented, I had then despis'd him.
What's all the gaudy glitter of a crown?
What, but the glaring meteor of ambition,
That leads a wretch benighted in his errors.
Points to the gulph, and shines upon destruction.

Mar. You wrong your charms, whose pow'r might re-
Things opposite in nature.—Had he seen you!— [concile

Cristina. He has, my Mariana, he has seen me.
I'll tell thee—yet while inexpert of years,
I heard of bloody spoils, the waste of war,
And dire conflicting man; Gustavus' name
Superior rose, still dreadful in the tale:
Then first he seiz'd my infancy of soul,
As somewhat fabled of gigantic fierceness,
Too huge for any form; he scar'd my sleep,
And fill'd my young idea. Not the boast
Of all his virtues, graces only known
To him, and heav'nly natures! cou'd erase
The strong impression; 'till that wond'rous day
In which he met my eyes. But O, O heav'n!
O love, and all ye cordial pow'rs of passion!
What then was my amazement! he was chain'd,
Was chain'd, my Mariana! Like the robes
Of coronation, worn by youthful kings,
He drew his shackles. The Herculean nerve
Braced his young arm; and soften'd in his cheek
Liv'd more than woman's sweetness! Then his eye!
His mein! his native dignity! He look'd,
As tho' he led captivity in chains,
And all were slaves around.

Mar. Did he observe you?

Cristina. He did: for as I trembled, look'd and sigh'd,
His eyes met mine; he fix'd their glories on me.
Confusion thrill'd me then, and secret joy,
Fast throbbing, stole its treasures from my heart,
And mantling upward, turn'd my face to crimson.

I wish'd

I wish'd——but did not dare to look——he gaz'd;
When sudden, as by force, he turn'd away,
And would no more behold me.

Enter Laertes:

Laer. Ah, bright imperial maid! my royal mistress!

Cristina. What wou'dst thou say? Thy looks speak
terror to me.

Laer. O you are ruin'd sacrific'd, undone!
I heard it all; your cruel, cruel father
Has sold you, giv'n you up a spoil to treason,
The purchase of the noblest blood on earth——
Gustavus!——

Cristina. Ah! What of him? Where, where is he?

Laer. In Dalecarlia, on some great design,
Doom'd in an hour to fall by faithless hands:
His friend, the brave, the false, deceiv'd Arvida,
Ev'n now prepares to lead a band of ruffians
Beneath the winding covert of the hill,
And seize Gustavus, obvious to the snares
Of friendship's fair dissemblance. And your father
Has vow'd your beauties to Arvida's arms,
The purchase of his falsehood.

Cristina. Shield me, heav'n!
First, duty, break thy filial bands in sunder,
And blot the name of parent from the world!
Is there no lett, no means of quick prevention?

Laer. Behold my life still chain'd to thy direction,
My will shall have a wing for ev'ry word,
That breathes thy mandate.

Cristina. Will you, good Laertes?
Alas, I fear to overtask thy friendship,
Say, will you save me then——O go, haste, fly!
Acquaint Gustavus——if, if he must fall,
Let hosts that hem this single lion in,
Let nations hunt him down——let him fall nobly.

Laer. I go, my Princess——Heav'n direct me to him!

[*Exit.*

Cristina. I wou'd pray too, to save me from pollution;
Detested stain, the touch of the betrayer!
But mighty love the partial pray'r arrests,
And leaves me only anxious for Gustavus.
For him cold fears my fainting bosom chill,
His cares distract me, and his dangers kill;

Ye pow'rs! if deaf to all the vows I make,
 Yet shield Gustavus, for Gustavus' sake;
 Protect his virtues from a faithless foe,
 And save your only image, left below.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *Mountains of Dalecarlia.**Enter Gustavus, as a Peasant—Dalecarlians following.*

GUSTAVUS.

YE men of Sweden, wherefore are ye come?
 See ye not yonder, how the locusts swarm,
 To drink the fountains of your honour up,
 And leave your hills a desert—Wretched men!
 Why came ye forth? Is this a time for sport?
 Or are ye met with song and jovial feast,
 To welcome your new guests, your Danish visitants?
 To stretch your supple necks beneath their feet,
 And fawning lick the dust?—Go, go, my countrymen,
 Each to your several mansions, trim them out,
 Cull all the tedious earnings of your toil
 To purchase bondage—Bid your blooming daughters,
 And your chaste wives to spread their beds with softness;
 Then go ye forth, and with your proper hands
 Conduct your masters in: conduct the sons
 Of lust and violation—O Swedes, Swedes!
 Heav'ns! are ye men, and will ye suffer this?

*Enter Arnoldus, who talks apart with Gustavus.**1st Dale.* How my blood boils!*2d Dale.* Who is this honest spokesman;*3d Dale.* What, know ye not Rodolphus of the mines?
 A better lab'rer ne'er struck steel to stone.

Gust. There was a time, my friends! a glorious time;
 When, had a single man of your forefathers
 Upon the frontier met a host in arms,
 His courage scarce had turn'd; himself had stood,

Alone

Alone had stood the bulwark of his country.
Your fires were known but by their manly fronts,
On their black brows, enthron'd, fat liberty,
The awe of honour, and contempt of death.

1st Dale. We are not bastards.

2d Dale. No.

3d Dale. We're Dalecarlians.

Guf. Come, come ye on then. Here I take my stand!
Here, on the brink, the very verge of liberty;
Altho' contention rise upon the clouds,
Mix heav'n with earth, and roll the ruin onward;
Here will I fix, and breast me to the shock,
'Till I, or Denmark fall.

Siv. And who art thou?

That thus wou'dst swallow all the glory up
That shou'd redeem the times? Behold this breast,
The sword has till'd it; and the stripes of slaves
Shall ne'er trace honour here: shall never blot
The fair inscription—Never shall the cords
Of Danish insolence bind down these arms
That bore my royal master from the field.

Guf. Ha! Say you, brother? Were you there—O grief!
Where liberty and Stenon fell together?

Siv. Yes, I was there—A bloody field it was,
Where conquest gasp'd, and wanted breath to tell,
Its o'er-toil'd triumph. There, our bleeding King,
There Stenon on this bosom made his bed,
And rolling back his dying eyes upon me:
Soldier, he cried, if e'er it be thy lot
To see my valiant cousin, great Gustavus,
Tell him—for once, that I have fought like him,
And wou'd like him have—
Conquer'd—he shou'd have said—but there, O there
Death stopt him short.

Guf. Come to my arms, and let me hide thy tears,
For I have caught their softness—O Danes, Danes!
You shall weep blood for this. Shall they not, brother?
Yes, we will deal our might with thrifty vengeance,
A life for ev'ry blow, and when we fall,
There shall be weight in't; like the tort'ring tow'rs
That draw contiguous ruin.

Siv.

Siv. Brave, brave man!

My soul admires thee—By my father's spirit,

I wou'd not barter such a death as this

For immortality! Nor we alone—

Here be the trusty gleanings of that field

Where last we fought for freedom: here's rich poverty,

'Tho' wrapp'd in rags, my fifty brave companions,

Who thro' the force of fifteen thousand foes

Bore off their King, and sav'd his great remains. [*Captain,*

Guf. Give me your hands, those valiant hands.—Why,

We could but die alone, with these we'll conquer.

My fellow lab'ers too———What say ye, friends?

Shall we not strike for't?

All. Death; victory or death!

No bonds, no bonds!

Arn. Spoke like yourselves—Ye men of Dalecarlia,

Brave men and bold! Whom ev'ry future age,

Tongues, nations, languages, and rolls of fame

Shall mark for wond'rous deeds, achievements won

From honour's dang'rous summit, warriors all!

Say, might ye chuse a chief, for high exploits,

From the first annal, to the latest praise

That breathes a hero's name—Speak, name the man

Who then should meet your wish?

Siv. Forbear the theme.

Why wou'dst thou seek to sink us with the weight

Of grievous recollection? O Gustavus!

Cou'd the dead wake, thou wert that man of men,

First of the foremost.

Guf. Didst thou know Gustavus?

[worth

Siv. Know him! O heav'n! what else, who else was

The knowledge of a soldier? That great day,

When Cristiern, in his third attempt on Sweden,

Had sum'd his pow'rs and weigh'd the scale of fight:

On the bold brink, the very push of conquest,

Gustavus rush'd, and bore the battle down;

In his full sway of prowess, like leviathan

That scoops his foaming progress on the main,

And drives the shoals along—forward I sprung,

All emulous, and lab'ring to attend him;

Fear fled before, behind him rout grew loud,

And distant wonder gaz'd—At length he turn'd,

And having ey'd me with a wond'rous look

Of sweetness mix'd with glory—Grace inestimable!
 He pluck'd this bracelet from his conqu'ring arm
 And bound it here—My wrist seem'd treble nerv'd;
 My heart spoke to him, and I did such deeds
 As best might thank him—But from that bless'd day
 I never saw him more—yet still to this,
 I bow, as to the relics of my faint:
 Each morn I drop a tear on ev'ry bead;
 Count all the glories of Gustavus o'er,
 And think I still behold him.

Guf. Rightly thought;
 For so thou dost, my foldier.
 Give me my arms—Off, off, ye dark disguises!
 For I will be myself. Behold your general,
 Gustavus! Come once more to lead ye on
 To laurel'd victory, to fame, to freedom!

1st Dale. Is it?

2d Dale. Yes.

3d Dale. No.

4th Dale. 'Tis he!

5th Dale. 'Tis he!

6th Dale. 'Tis he!

Siv. Strike me, ye pow'rs!—It is illusion all!
 It cannot.

Guf. What, no nearer?

Siv. 'Tis, it is!— [*Falls and embraces his knees.*]

Guf. O speechless eloquence!

Rise to my arms, my friend.

Siv. Friend! said you, friend?

O my heart's Lord! My conqu'rer! my!—

Guf. Approach, my fellow soldiers, your Gustavus

Claims no precedence here: friendship like mine

Throws all respects behind it—'tis enough—

I read your joys, your transports in your eyes;

And wou'd, O, wou'd I had a life to spend,

For ev'ry soldier here! whose ev'ry life's

Far dearer than my own; dearer than aught,

Except your liberty, except your honour.

Perish Gustavus, 'ere this sacred sun,

That lights the rest of Sweden to their shame,

Should blush upon your chains! Why said I chains!

To souls like yours, I should have talk'd of triumphs,
 Empire, and fame, and hazards imminent,
 Occasions wish'd, for glory——haste, brave men!
 Collect your friends to join us on the instant;
 Summon our brethren to their share of conquest,
 And let loud echo, from her circling hills,
 Sound freedom, 'till the undulation shake
 The bounds of utmost Sweden.

[*Excunt Dalecarlians, crying Gustavus, Gustavus, liberty!*

Enter Anderson.

And. There was a glorious sound!

Guf. Yes, Anderson,

The long-wish'd hour is come——the storm is up,
 And wrecks will follow. Where they are to light
 Let Heav'n determine. Well, my noble friend,
 Has Peterfon set out?

And. He has, this instant;

And bears your packet to the tyrant's camp.

Guf. What think you of his zeal?

And. In truth, my Lord,

It wears a gallant show.

Guf. 'Tis specious all,

Flash without fire, the lightning of a cloud
 That carries darkness in the rear——For Peterfon,
 To spread my letters through the camp of Cristiern,
 And seek for succours in the jaws of death,
 It shew'd too bold, too much the flaming patriot.
 Beside, I know him for the friend of Trollio.

And. Why would you then employ him?

Guf. There's the mystery.

'Tis not his faith, but treachery I trust to.
 My letters are directed to the chiefs
 Of those inglorious mercenary Swedes,
 Whom Cristiern has seduced to join his host,
 And turn the sword of conquest on their country;
 To each of those I have address'd in terms
 Of special correspondence, meant to rouse
 The jealousy of Cristiern; as I think
 My packet can't escape him——What ensues?
 The tyrant hence concludes himself betray'd,
 Sifts all his legions, thins the ranks of fight,
 And leaves them open to our bold invasion.

But grant that Peterfon deceive my aim,
 And hold the rank of virtue; then the Swedes
 May waken to the glorious call of honour.
 So——ev'ry way it saves us from the guilt
 Of Swedes encount'ring Swedes, and spares the blood
 Of brethren, though revolted.

And. On my soul,
 This is a stratagem that saps the miner,
 Makes treason turn a traitor to itself;
 And mock its own designs.

Guf. Oh, noble friend, fast winds the great machine
 That strikes the fate of Sweden---Go, my Anderson,
 Assemble all thy brave adherents round thee,
 With warlike inspiration warm their souls,
 And haste to join me here.

And. I will, my Lord.

[*Exit.*

Enter Laertes.

Laer. Thy presence nobly speaks the man I wish, *Guf-*

Guf. Yes. Thou hast a hostile garb, [*ravus.*

Ha! say---Art thou Laertes? If I err not,
 There is a friendly semblance in that face,
 Which answers to a fond impression here,
 And tells me I'm thy debtor——my deliv'rer!

Laer. No, valiant prince, you over-rate my service,
 There is a worthier object of your gratitude
 Whom yet you know not---Oh, I have to tell——
 But then to gain your credit, must unfold
 What haply should be secret——Be it so;
 You are all honour.

Guf. Let me to thy mind,
 For thou hast wak'd my soul into a thought
 That holds me all attention.

Laer. Mightiest man!
 To me alone you held yourself oblig'd
 For life and liberty—Had it been so,
 I were more bless'd, with retribution just
 To pay thee for my own: for on the day
 When by your arm the mighty Thraces fell,
 Fate threw me to your sword—You spar'd my youth,
 And in the very whirl and rage of fight
 Your eye was taught compassion—from that hour

D

I vow'd

I vow'd my life the slave of your rememb'rance ;
 And often, as Cristina, heav'nly maid !
 The mistress of my service, question'd me
 Of wars and vent'rous deeds, my tidings came
 Still freighted with thy name, until the day
 In which yourself appear'd, to make praise speechless.
 Cristina saw you then, and on your fate
 Dropp'd a kind tear ; and when your noble scorn
 Of proffer'd terms provok'd her father's rage
 To take the deadly forfeit ; she, she only,
 Whose virtues watch'd the precious hour of mercy,
 All trembling, sent my secret hand to save you ;
 Where, through a pass unknown to all your keepers,
 I led you forth, and gave you to your liberty.

Guf. Oh, I am sunk, o'erwhelm'd with wond'rous good-
 But were I rich, and free as opening mines [ness !
 That teem their golden wealth upon the world,
 Still I were poor, unequal to her bounty.
 Nor can I longer doubt whose gen'rous arm
 In my Arvida, in my friend's deliverance,
 Gave double life, and freedom to Gustavus.

Laer. A fatal present ! Ah, you know him not ;
 Arvida is misled, undone by passion ;
 False to your friendship, to your trust unfaithful.

Guf. Ha ! hold !

Laer. I must unfold it.

Guf. Yet forbear :

This way—I hear some footing—pray you, soft—
 If thou hast aught to urge against Arvida,
 The man of virtue, tell it not the wind ;
 Lest slander catch the sound, and guilt should triumph.

[*Exeunt.*

Arvida entering, speaks to a Soldier.

Arv. He's here—bear back my orders to your fel-
 That not a man, on peril of his life, [lows
 Advance in fight till call'd.

Sold. My Lord, I will—

Arv. Have I not vow'd it, faithless as he is,
 Have I not vow'd his fall ? Yet, good Heav'n !
 Why start these sudden tears ? On, on I must,
 For I am half way down the dizzy steep,
 Where my brain turns---A draught of Lethe now---
 Oh, that the world would sleep---to wake no more !

Or

Or that the name of friendship bore no charm
 To make my nerve unsteady, and this steel
 Flee backward from its task ! It shall be done.
 Empire ! Cristina ! though th' affrighted sun
 Start back with horror of the direful stroke,
 It shall be done. Calm, calm the hell within,
 Thy looks may else turn traitors---Ha, he comes !
 How steadily he looks, as Heav'n's own book,
 The leaf of truth, were open'd on his aspect.
 Up, up, dark minister——his fate call out

[Puts up the dagger.]

To nobler execution ; for he comes
 In opposition, singly, man to man,
 As though he brav'd my wish.

Enter Gustavus.

*[They look for some time on each other ; Arvida lays
 his hand on his sword, and withdraws it by turns ;
 then advances irresolutely.]*

Guf. Is it then so ?

Arv. Defend thyself.

Guf. No——strike——

I would unfold my bosom to thy sword,
 But that I know the wound you give this breast
 Would doubly pierce thy own.

Arv. I know thee not——

It is the time's eclipse, and what should be
 In nature, now is nameless.

Guf. Ah, my brother !

Arv. What wouldst thou ?

Guf. Is it thus we two should meet ?

Arv. Art thou not false ? Deep else, Oh, deep indeed
 Were my damnation.

Guf. Dear, unhappy man !

My heart bleeds for thee. False I'd surely been,
 Had I like thee been tempted.

Arv. Ha ! Speak, speak ;

Did thou not send to treat with Cristiern ?

Guf. Never.

I know thy error, but I know the arts,
 The frauds, the wiles, that practis'd on thy virtue ;
 Firm how you stood, and tow'r'd above mortality ;
 'Till in the fond unguarded hour of love,

The wily undermining 'Trollio came,
 And won thee from thyself—a moment won thee:
 For still thou art Arvida; still the man
 On whom thy country calls for her deliv'rance.
 Already are her bravest sons in arms,
 Mark, how they shout, impatient of our presence,
 To lead them on to a new life of liberty,
 To fame, to conquest---Ha, Heav'n guard my brother,
 Thy cheek turns pale, thy eye is wild upon me,
 Wilt thou not answer me?

Arv. Gustavus!

Guf. Speak.

Arv. Have I not dream'd?

Guf. No other I esteem it.

Where lives the man whose reason slumbers not?
 Still pure, still blameless, if at wonted dawn
 Again he wakes to virtue.

Arv. Oh, my dawn
 Must soon be dark. Confusion dissipates,
 To leave me worse confounded.

Guf. Think no more on't.

Come to my arms, thou dearest of mankind!

Arv. Stand off! Pollution dwells within my touch,
 And horror hangs around me---Cruel man!
 Oh, thou hast doubly damn'd me with this goodness;
 For resolution held the deed as done,
 That now must sink me---Hark! I'm summon'd hence,
 My audit opens! Poise me! for I stand
 Upon a spire, against whose sightless base
 Hell breaks his wave beneath. Down, down I dare not,
 And up I cannot look, for justice fronts me.
 Thou shalt have vengeance, though my purpling blood
 Were nectar for heav'n's bowl, as warm and rich,
 As now 'tis base, it thus should pour for pardon.

[Gustavus catches his arm, and in the struggle the dagger falls.]

Guf. Ha! Hold, Arvida---No, I will not lose thee---
 Forbid it, Heav'n! thou shalt not rob me so;
 No, I will struggle with thee to the last,
 And save thee from thyself. Oh, answer me!
 Wilt thou forsake me? Answer me, my brother,
 My best Arvida.

Arv.

Arv. I would speak to thee—
But let it be by silence—Oh, Gustavus!

Guf. Say but you'll live.

Arv. Oh!

Guf. For my sake.

Arv. Yes, take me;

Expose me, cage me, brand me for the tool
Of crafted villains, for the veriest slave,
On whom the bend of each contemptuous brow
Shall look with loathing. Ah, my turpitude
Shall be the vile comparative for knaves
To boast and whiten by!

Guf. Not so, not so.

Who knows no fault, my friend, knows no perfection.
The rectitude that Heav'n appoints to man
Leads on through error; and the kindly sense
Of having stray'd, endears the road to bliss;
It makes Heav'n's way more pleasing! Oh, my brother,
'Tis hence a thousand cordial charities
Derive their growth, their vigour, and their sweetness.
This short lapse
Shall to thy future foot give cautious treading,
Erect and firm in virtue.

Arv. Give me leave.

[Offers to pass.]

Guf. You shall not pass.

Arv. I must.

Guf. Whither?

Arv. I know not—Oh, Gustavus!:

Guf. Speak.

Arv. You can't forgive me.

Guf. Not forgive thee!

Arv. No.

Look there. [Points to the dagger.]
And yet when I resolv'd to kill thee,
I could have died---indeed I could---for thee
I could have died, Gustavus!

Guf. Oh, I know it.

A gen'rous mind, though sway'd a-while by passion,
Is like the steely vigour of the bow,
Still hold its native rectitude, and bends
But to recoil more forceful. Come, forget it.

Enter a Dalecarlian.

Dale. My Lord, as I now pass'd the mountain's brow,
I spy'd some men, whose arms, and strange attire,
Give cause for circumspection.

Guf. Danes, perhaps;

Haste, intercept their passage to the camp. [*Exit Dal.*

Arv. Those are the Danes that witness to my shame.

Guf. Perish th' opprobrious term! not so, Arvida;
Myself will be the guardian of thy fame;
Trust me, I will---Our friends approach---Oh, clear,
While I attend them, clear that cloud, my brother,
That sits upon the morning of thy youth;
It hangs too near the heart of thy Gustavus. [*Exit.*

Arv. Of thy Gustavus! Oh, wretch, wretch, cursed
wretch!

What is this time and place, and toys of circumstance;
That wind our actions, so, as Heav'n's own hand
What's done may not unravel?---Pardon may!---
There's the Lethæan sweet, the snow of heav'n,
New blanching-o'er the Negro front of guilt,
That to the eye of mercy all appears
Fair as th' unwritten page---yet self-convict,
Tho' Heav'n's free pow'r should pardon, where's my peace?
Thus, thus to be driven out from my own breast!
To have no shed, no shelt'ring nook at home
To take reflection in! How looks the wretch
Whose heart cries villain to itself? I'll not
Endure its battery---Somewhat must be done
Of high import ere night, that I may sleep,
Or wake for ever.

*Enter Gustavus, followed by the Dalecarlians, Anderson,
Arnoldus, Sivard, Officers, &c.*

1st Dale. Let us all see him!

2^d Dale. Yes, and hear him too.

3^d Dale. Let us be sure 'tis he himself.

4th Dale. Our general.

5th Dale. And we will fight while weapons can be found.

6th Dale. Or hands to wield them.

7th Dale. Get on the bank, Gustavus.

And. Do, my Lord.

Guf. My countrymen!---

1st Dale. Ho ! hear him.

2^d Dale. Peace !

3^d Dale. Peace !

4th Dale. Peace !

Guf. Amazement I perceive hath fill'd your hearts,
And joy for that your lost Gustavus, 'scap'd
Thro' wounds, imprisonments, and chains, and deaths,
Thus sudden, thus unlook'd for stands before ye.
As one escap'd from cruel hands I come,
From hearts that ne'er knew pity ; dark and vengeful ;
Who quaff the tears of orphans, bathe in blood,
And know no music but the groans of Sweden.
Yet, not for that my sister's early innocence,
And mother's age now grind beneath captivity :
Nor that one bloody, one remorseless hour
Swept my great fire, and kindred from my side ;
For them Gustavus weeps not, though my eyes
Were far less dear, for them I will not weep.
But, Oh, great parent, when I think on thee !
Thy numberless, thy nameless, shameful infamies,
My widow'd country ! Sweden ! when I think
Upon thy desolation, spite of rage——
And vengeance that would choak them—tears will flow.

And. Oh, they are villains, ev'ry Dane of them,
Practis'd to stab and smile ; to stab the babe
That smiles upon them.

Arn. What accursed hours
Roll o'er those wretches, who to fiends like these
In their dear liberty, have barter'd more
Than worlds will rate for ?

Guf. Oh, liberty, Heav'n's choice prerogative !
True bond of law, thou social soul of property,
'Thou breath of reason, life of life itself !
For thee the valiant bleed. Oh, sacred liberty !
Wing'd from the summer's snare, from flatt'ring ruin,
Like the bold stork you seek the wint'ry shore,
Leave courts, and pomps, and palaces to slaves,
Cleave to the cold, and rest upon the storm.
Upborn by thee, my soul disdain'd the terms
Of empire——offer'd at the hands of tyrants.
With thee, I fought this fav'rite foil ; with thee,
These fav'rite sons I fought ; thy sons, Oh, Liberty :

For

For ev'n amid the wilds of life you lead them,
Lift their low rafted cottage to the clouds,
Smile o'er their heaths, and from their mountain tops
Beam glory to the nations.

All. Liberty! Liberty!

Gust. Are ye not mark'd, ye men of Dalecarlia,
Are ye not mark'd by all the circling world
As the great stake, the last effort for liberty?
Say, is it not your wealth, the thirst, the food,
The scope and bright ambition of your souls?
Why else have you, and your renown'd forefathers,
From the proud summit of their glitt'ring thrones,
Cast down the mightiest of your lawful kings
That dar'd the bold infringement? What, but liberty,
Through the fam'd course of thirteen hundred years,
Aloof hath held invasion from your hills,
And sanctify'd their shade?—And will ye, will ye
Shrink from the hopes of the expecting world;
Bid your high honours stoop to foreign insult,
And in one hour give up to infamy
The harvest of a thousand years of glory?

1st Dale. No.

2d Dale. Never, never.

3d Dale. Perish all first.

4th Dale. Die all!

Gust. Yes, die by piëcemeal!

Leave not a limb o'er which a Dane may triumph!
Now from my soul I joy, I joy, my friends,
To see ye fear'd; to see that ev'n your foes
Do justice to your valours!—There they be,
The pow'rs of kingdoms, summ'd in yonder host,
Yet kept aloof, yet trembling to assail ye.
And, Oh, when I look round and see you here,
Of number short, but prevalent in virtue,
My heart swells high and burns for the encounter.
True courage but from opposition grows;
And what are fifty, what a thousand slaves,
Match'd to the sinew of a single arm
That strikes for liberty? That strikes to save
His fields from fire, his infants from the sword,
His couch from lust, his daughters from pollution;
And his large honours from eternal infamy?

What, doubt we then? Shall we, shall we stand here
 'Till motives that might warm an ague's frost,
 And nerve the coward's arm, shall poorly serve
 To wake us to resistance?—Let us on!

Oh, yes, I read your lovely fierce impatience;
 You shall not be withheld; we will rush on them—
 This is indeed to triumph, where we hold
 Three kingdoms in our toil! Is it not glorious,
 Thus to appal the bold, meet force with fury,
 And push yon torrent back, 'till ev'ry wave
 Flee to its fountain?

3d Dale. On, lead us on, Gustavus; one word more
 Is but delay of conquest.

Gus. Take your wish.

He, who wants arms, may grapple with the foe,
 And so be furnish'd. You, most noble Anderson,
 Divide our pow'rs, and with the fam'd Olaus
 Take the left rout—You, Eric, great in arms!
 With the renown'd Nederbi, hold the right,
 And skirt the forest down: then wheel at once,
 Confess'd to view, and close upon the vale:
 Myself, and my most valiant cousin here,
 Th' invincible Arvida, gallant Sivard,
 Arnoidus, and these hundred hardy vet'rans,
 Will pour directly on, and lead the onset.
 Joy, joy, I see confess'd from ev'ry eye,
 Your limbs tread vigorous, and your breasts beat high!
 Thin though our ranks, though scanty be our bands,
 Bold are our hearts, and nervous are our hands.
 With us, truth, justice, fame, and freedom close,
 Each, singly equal to an host of foes,
 I feel, I feel them fill me out for fight,
 They lift my limbs as feather'd Hermes' light!
 Or like the bird of glory, tow'ring high,
 Thunder within his grasp, and light'ning in his eye!

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE *before the Camp.**Enter Cristiern, Trollio, and Attendants.*

CRISTIERN.

YOUR observation's just, I see it, Trollio :
Men are machines, with all their boasted freedom,
Their movements turn upon some fa'rite passion ;
Let art but find the latent foible out,
We touch the spring, and wind them at our pleasure.

Trol. Let Heav'n spy out for virtue, and then starve it ;
But vice and frailty are the statesman's quarry,
The objects of our search, and of our science,
Mark'd by our smiles, and cherish'd by our bounty ;
'Tis hence you lord it o'er your servile senates ;
How low the slaves will stoop to gorge their lusts
When aptly baited : ev'n the tongues of patriots,
(Those sons of clamour) oft relax the nerve
Within the warmth of favour.

Crist. How else should kings subsist ? For what is pow'r,
But the nice conduct of another's weakness ?
That thing call'd Virtue, is the bane of government,
A libel on the state, that asks suppression ;
It has a hateful and unbending quality ;
It serves no end, still restive to the rein,
And to the spur unspeedy : they who boast it
Are traitors, rivals of their king, my Trollio ;
And, wanting other subjects, greatly dare
To lord it o'er themselves. Such is Gustavus,
If yet he be —
And such Arvida was ; though now, I trust,
He is too far advanc'd in our designs
To think of a retreat.

Trol. Impossible !
Already has he leap'd the guilty mound
That might appal his virtue ; for the world
He dare not now look back ; where shame pursues,
And cuts off all retreat.

Enter

Enter Gentleman Usher and Peterfon, who kneels.

Gent. My liege, Lord Peterfon.

Crist. Rise to our trust, most worthy Peterfon ;
Rise to our friendship : by my head, I swear,
Bar but our Trollio here, there's not a Swede,
Who holds thy valued level in our heart !
For thou'rt unshaken, though thy nation swerve ;
Faithful among the faithless.

Peter. What I am,
Let this inform your majesty.

[*Gives a packet.*]

Trol. A packet !
Whence had you that, my friend ?

Peter. Even from the hands
Of the once great Gustavus.

Crist. Then you have seen him. Tell me, tell me,
Peterfon,
What said he ? Eh ! How look'd the mighty rebel ?
His means, his scope, the pride of his presumption,
Give me the whole !

Peter. Last night, my gracious Lord,
While yet I held your messenger in conference ;
Arriv'd, who brought a letter from Gustavus,
Wherein, digesting many flagrant terms
Of mutinous import against the state
Of your high dignity ; by morning light
He pray'd me to attend him ; boasting much
Of plenteous hopes, and means of boldest enterprize.
Of this I gave you notice ; and ere dawn
Set out for fresh intelligence— I came ;
I saw him shrunk, that glory of the north,
Soil'd with the vileness of a slave's attire ;
Where in the depth and darkness of the mines,
For six long months he hath not seen the sun ;
Colleagu'd with circling horrors ; hourly toil
Hath been his watch, and penury his earning ;
But like the lion, newly broke from bonds,
The mingling passions from his eyes dart glory ;
Pride lifts his stature, and his opening front
Still looks dominion.

Crist. Who were his adherents ?

Peter. The traitor Anderson, and a few friends,
To whom, ere I set out, he stood reveal'd.
And when I seem'd to question on his pow'rs

Of rivalship, the props whereon he meant
To lift contention to the princely front
Of such high opposition; he reply'd,
His powers were near your person.

Crist. How! what's here? [*Looks on the paquet.*
To Laurens, Aland, Haquin, and Roderic,
Confusion! Treason's in our camp! Who's there?

Gent. My liege!

Crist. Bear this to Norbi — Bid him seize

[*Gives a signet.*

The Swedish captains.

Trol. Might I but presume—

Crist. I will not be controul'd—bid him seize all,
Soldiers and chiefs! By hell, there's not a Swede,
But lurks an instrument to prompt rebellion,
And plots upon my life! Look there, 'tis evident:

[*Gives Trollio a letter.*

They are all leagu'd, confed'rate with Gustavus,
Th' abettors of his treason.

Trol. It should seem so:

And yet it should not—Tell me, Peterfon,
Art thou assur'd thy credit with Gustavus
Will answer to a trust like this?—Ha! Say.

Peter. Yes, well assur'd: my zeal appear'd too warm
To give the least cold colour for suspicion.

Trol. I fear, my friend, I fear he has o'er-reach'd you.
Divide and conquer, is the sum of politics.
Beyond the dreaded circle of his sword,
Gustavus triumphs in an ample genius;
He walks at large, sees clear and wide around him;
Calm in the storm and turbulence of action;
He ponders on the last event of things,
And makes each cause subservient to the consequence.

Crist. You over-rate his craft; they're false, my Trol-
False ev'ry Swede of them; I read their souls. [*lio,*

Enter Cristina and Mariana.

Cristina. I heard it was your royal pleasure, Sir,
I should attend your highness.

Crist. Yes, Cristina,

But business interferes.

[*Exeunt Christina and Mar.*

Enter an Officer.

Off. My sovereign liege!
Wide o'er the western shelving of yon hill,

We think, tho' indistinctly, we can spy,
Like men in motion must'ring on the heath;
And there is one who saith he can discern
A few of martial gesture, and bright arms,
Who this way bend their action.

Cristina. Friends, perhaps:

For foes it were too daring—Haste thee, Trollio,
Detach a thousand of our Danish horse,
To rule their motions. We will out ourself,
And hold our pow'rs in readiness. Lead on. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Cristina and Mariana.

Mar. Ha! did you mark, my Princess, did you mark?
Should some reverse, some wond'rous whirl of fate,
Once more return Gustavus to the battle,
New nerve his arm, and wreath his brow with conquest,
Say, would you not repent that e'er you sav'd
This dreadful man, the foe of your great race,
Who pours impetuous in his country's cause,
To spoil you of a kingdom?

Cristina. No, my friend;

Had I to death or bondage sold my fire,
Or had Gustavus on our native realms
Made hostile inroad, then, my Mariana,
Had I then sav'd him from the stroke of justice,
I should not cease my suit to Heav'n for pardon.
But if, tho' in a foe, to rev'rence virtue,
Withstand oppression, rescue injur'd innocence,
Step boldly in betwixt my fire and guilt,
And save my king, my father from dishonour;
If this be sin, I have shook hands with penitence.
First, perish crowns, dominion, all the shine
And transience of this world, ere guilt shall serve,
To buy the vain incumbrance.

Mar. Do not think

I meant, my Princess, to arraign your virtues,
Howe'er I seem'd to question on the consequence.

Cristina. The consequence of virtue must be good;
It must. Tho' it should prove my father's lot,
In being rescu'd from one act of guilt,
To lose the whole of all his wide dominions,
He were a gainer. Blasted be that royalty,
Which murder must make sure, and crimes inglorious!

The bulk of kingdoms, nay, the world is light,
 When guilt weighs opposite. Oh, would to Heav'n,
 The loss of empire would restore his innocence,
 Restore the fortunes, and the precious lives
 Of thousands, fall'n the victims of ambition!

Enter Laertes.

Ha, Laertes! most welcome—Well, and have you? Say,

Laer. O, royal maid!—— [Laertes——

Cristina. Thy looks are doubtful. Speak——

Why art thou silent? Does he live?

Laer. He does:

But death, ere night, must fill a long account.
 The camp, the country's in confusion; war
 And changes ride upon the hour that hastes
 To intercept my tongue——I else could tell
 Of virtues hitherto beyond my ken;
 Courage, to which the lion stoops his crest,
 Yet grafted upon qualities as soft
 As a rock'd infant's meekness; such as tempts
 Against my faith, my country, and allegiance,
 To wish thee speed, Gustavus.

Cristina. Then you found him.

Laer. I did; and warn'd him; but in vain; for death
 To him appear'd more grateful than to find
 His friend's dishonour. [Laertes!

Cristina. Give me the manner—quick——soft, good

Enter Cristiern, Trollio, Peterson, Danes, &c.

Crist. Damn'd, double traitor! Oh, curs'd, false Arvida!
 Guard well the Swedish pris'ners; bind them hard.
 Stand to your arms. Bring forth the captives there.

Enter Augusta and Gustava guarded.

Trol. My liege——

Crist. Away! I'll hear no more of politics.
 Fortune! we will not trust the changeling more,
 But wear her girt upon our armed loins,
 Or pointed in our grasp.

Enter an Officer.

Off. The foe's at hand.
 With gallant shew your thousand Danes rode forth,
 But shall return no more. I mark'd the action;
 A band of desp'rate resolute rush'd on them,

Scarce numb'ring to a tenth, and in mid way
 They clos'd ; the shock was dreadful, nor your Danes
 Could bear the madding charge ; a while they stood,
 Then shrunk, and broke, and turn'd ; when, lo, behind,
 Fast wheeling from the right and left there pour'd,
 Who intercepted their return, and, caught
 Within the toil, they perish'd.

Crist. 'Tis Gustavus !

No mortal else, not Ammon's boasted son,
 Not Cæsar would have dar'd it. Tell me, say,
 What numbers in the whole may they amount to ?

Off. About five thousand.

Crist. And no more ?

Off. No more,
 That yet appear.

Crist. We count six times their sum.

Haste, soldier, take a trumpet ; tell Gustavus,
 We have of terms to offer, and would treat
 Touching his mother's ransom ; say, her death,
 Suspended by our grace, but waits his answer. [*Exit Off.*
 Madam, it should well suit with your authority [*To Augus.*
 'To check this frenzy in your son. Look to it,
 Or, by the saints, this hour's your last of life.

Augus. Come, my Gustava ; comé, my little captive ;
 We shall be free ; our tyrant is grown kind ;
 And for these chains that bind thy pretty arms,
 The golden cherubim shall lend thee wings,
 And thou shalt mount amid the smiling choir
 Of little heav'nly songsters, like thyself,
 All rob'd in innocence.

Gustava. Will you go, mother ?

Augus. So help me, mercy ! Yes, I'll go, my child ;
 And I will give thee to thy father's fondness,
 And to the arms of all thy royal race
 In heav'n, who sit on thrones, with loves, and joys,
 And pleasures smiling round.

Crist. Is this my answer ?

Come forth, ye ministers of death, come forth.

Enter Russians, who seize Augusta and Gustava.

Pluck them asunder. We shall prove you, lady.
 'Tis my damn'd lot, thus ever to be crois'd
 With rank blown pride, and insolence eternal.

Gustava. Oh, mother, take me, take me from these
They fright me with their looks. [men!

Auguf. Alas, my child, I cannot take thee from them!

Gustava. Oh, they will hurt me! Can't you take me,
mother?

Auguf. They can't, they cannot hurt you, my Gustava.
Fear not, my little one; your name should be
A charm o'er cowardice; for you are call'd
After your valiant brother. He'll disown you;
He will not love you, if you fear, Gustava.

Cristina. Ah, I can hold no longer! Royal Sir,
Thus on my knees, and lower, lower still——

Crist. My child! What mean you?

Cristina. Oh, my gracious father!
Kill, kill me, rather; let me perish first;
But do not stain the sanctity of kings
With the sweet blood of helpless innocence;
Do not, my father; spare the little orphans,
And let the lambs go free.

Auguf. Ha! who art thou,
That look'st so like the 'habitants of heav'n?
Like mercy, sent upon the morning's blush,
To glad the heart, and cheer a gloomy world
With light till now unknown?

Crist. Away! they come.
I'll hear no more of your ill-tim'd petitions.

Cristina. Oh, yet, for pity!

Crist. I will none on't. Leave me.
Pity! it is the infant fool of nature.
Tear off her hold, and bear her to her tent.

[*Exeunt Cristina, Mar. Laer. and Attendants.*

Enter an Officer.

Off. My liege, Gustavus, tho' with much reluctance,
Consents to one hour's truce. His soldiers rest
Upon their arms, and, follow'd by a few,
He comes to know your terms.

Crist. I see; fall back.

Stand firm. Be ready, slaves, and, on the word,
Plunge deep your daggers in their bosoms. [*Points to Aug.*

Enter Gustavus, Arvida, Anderson, Arnoldus, Sivard, &c.
Hold!

Guf. Ha! 'tis, it is my mother!

Crist.

Crist. Tell me, Gustavus, tell me, why is this,
That, as a stream diverted from the banks
Of smooth obedience, thou hast drawn those men
Upon a dry unchannell'd enterprize,
To turn their inundation? Are the lives
Of my misguided people held so light,
That thus thou'dst push them on the keen rebuke
Of guarded majesty; where justice waits,
All awful, and resistless, to assert
Th' impervious rights, the sanctitude of kings,
And blast rebellion?

Gus. Justice, sanctitude,
And rights! Oh, patience! Rights! What rights, thou
Yes, if perdition be the rule of power, [tyrant?
If wrongs give right, Oh, then, supreme in mischief,
Thou wert the lord, the monarch of the world!
Too narrow for thy claim. But if thou think'st
That crowns are vilely propertied, like coin,
To be the means, the specialty of lust,
And sensual attribution; if thou think'st
That empire is of titled birth or blood;
That nature, in the proud behalf of one,
Shall disenfranchise all her lordly race,
And bow her gen'ral issue to the yoke
Of private domination; then, thou proud one,
Here know me for thy king. Howe'er, be told,
Not claim hereditary, not the trust
Of frank election,
Not ev'n the high anointing hand of Heav'n,
Can authorise oppression, give a law
For lawless power, wed faith to violation,
On reason build misrule, or justly bind
Allegiance to injustice. Tyranny
Absolves all faith; and who invades our rights,
Howe'er his own commence, can never be
But an usurper. But for thee, for thee
There is no name. Thou hast abjur'd mankind,
Dash'd safety from thy bleak, unsocial side,
And wag'd wild war with universal nature.

Crist. Licentious traitor! thou canst talk it largely.
Who made thee umpire of the rights of kings,
And pow'r, prime attribute? As on thy tongue

The poise of battle lay, and arms, of force,
 To throw defiance in the front of duty.
 Look round, unruly boy ! thy battle comes
 Like raw, disjointed must'ring, feeble wrath,
 A war of waters, borne against the rock
 Of our firm continent, to fume, and chafe,
 And shiver in the toil.

Gus. Mistaken wan !

I come impower'd, and strengthen'd in thy weakness ;
 For tho' the structure of a tyrant's throne
 Rise on the necks of half the suff'ring world,
 Fear trembles in the cement ; prayers, and tears,
 And secret curses sap its mould'ring base,
 And steal the pillars of allegiance from it :
 Then let a single arm but dare the sway,
 Headlong it turns, and drives upon destruction.

Trol. Profane, and alien to the love of Heav'n !
 Art thou still harden'd to the wrath divine,
 That hangs o'er thy rebellion ? Know'st thou not
 Thou art at enmity with grace, cast out,
 Made an anathema, a curse enroll'd
 Among the faithful, thou and thy adherents
 Shorn from our holy church, and offer'd up,
 As sacred to damnation ?

Gus. Yes, I know,
 When such as thou, with sacrilegious hand,
 Seize on the apostolic key of heav'n,
 It then becomes a tool for crafty knaves
 To shut out virtue, and unfold those gates,
 That Heav'n itself had barr'd against the lusts
 Of avarice and ambition. Soft and sweet,
 As looks of charity, or voice of lambs
 That bleat upon the morning, are the words
 Of christian meekness ! mission all divine !
 The law of love sole mandate. But your gall,
 Ye Swedish prelacy, your gall hath turn'd
 The words of sweet, but indigested peace,
 To wrath and bitterness. Ye hallow'd men,
 In whom vice sanctifies, whose precepts teach
 Zeal without truth, religion without virtue ;
 Who ne'er preach heav'n, but with a downward eye,
 That turn your souls to dross ; who, shouting, loose

The dogs of hell upon us. Thefts and rapes,
 Sack'd towns, and midnight howlings thro' the realm,
 Receive your sanction. Oh, 'tis glorious mischief!
 When vice turns holy, puts religion on,
 Assumes the robe pontifical, the eye
 Of faintly elevation, blesteth sin,
 And makes the seal of sweet offended Heav'n
 A sign of blood, a label for decrees,
 That hell would shrink to own.

Crist. No more of this.

Gustavus, wouldst thou yet return to grace,
 And hold thy motions in the sphere of duty,
 Acceptance might be found.

Guf. Imperial spoiler!

Give me my father, give me back my kindred,
 Give me the fathers of ten thousand orphans,
 Give me the sons in whom thy ruthless sword
 Has left our widows childless. Mine they were,
 Both mine, and ev'ry Swede's, whose patriot breast
 Bleeds in his country's woundings. Oh, thou canst not!
 Thou hast outfinn'd all reck'ning! Give me then
 My all that's left, my gentle mother there,
 And spare yon little trembler.

Crist. Yes, on terms
 Of compact and submission.

Guf. Ha! with thee?

Compact with thee! and mean'st thou for my country,
 For Sweden? No, so hold my heart but firm,
 Altho' it wring for't, tho' blood drop for tears,
 And at the sight my straining eyes start forth——
 They both shall perish first.

Crist. Slaves, do your office.

Guf. Hold yet——Thou canst not be so damn'd? My
 I dare not ask thy blessing. Where's Arvida? [mother!
 Where art thou? Come, my friend, thou'st known temp-
 And therefore best canst pity, or support me. [tation,

Arv. Alas! I shall but serve to weigh thee downward,
 To pull thee from the dazzling, fightless height,
 At which thy virtue soars. For, O, Gustavus!
 My soul is dark, disconsolate and dark;
 Sick to the world, and hateful to myself.
 I have no country now; I've nought but thee;

And.

And should yield up the int'rest of mankind,
Where thine's in question.

Augusta. See, my son relents.

Behold, O King! yet spare us but a moment;
His little sister shall embrace his knees,
And these fond arms around his duteous neck,
Shall join to bend him to us.

Crist. Could I trust ye——

Arv. I'll be your hostage.

Crist. Granted.

Guf. Hold, my friend——

[*Here Arvida breaks from Gustavus, and passes to Christian's party, while Augusta and Gustava go over to Gustavus.*]

Augusta. Is it then giv'n, yet giv'n me, ere I die,
To see thy face, Gustavus? Thus to gaze,
To touch, to fold thee thus?——My son, my son!
And have I liv'd to this? It is enough.

All arin'd, and in thy country's precious cause
Terribly beauteous; to behold thee thus!

Why, 'twas my only, hourly suit to Heav'n,
And now 'tis granted. Oh, my glorious child!
Bless'd were the throes I felt for thee, Gustavus;
For from the breast, from out your swathing bands,
You stepp'd the child of honour.

Guf. Oh, my mother!

Augusta. Why stands that water trembling in thy eye?
Why heaves thy bosom? Turn not thus away;
'Tis the last time that we must meet, my child,
And I will have thee whole. Why, why, Gustavus,
Why is this form of heaviness? For me,
I trust, it is not meant; you cannot think
So poorly of me. I grow old, my son,
And to the utmost period of mortality,
I ne'er should find a death's hour like to this
Whereby to do thee honour.

Guf. Roman patriots!

Ye, Decii, self-devoted to your country,
You gave no mothers up! Will annals yield
No precedent for this, no elder boast,
Whereby to match my trial?

Augusta. No, Gustavus;

For Heav'n still squares our trial to our strength,
 And thine is of the foremost. Noble youth!
 Ev'n I, thy parent, with a conscious pride,
 Have 'often bow'd to thy superior virtues.
 Oh, there is but one bitterness in death!
 One only sting——

Guf. Speak, speak!

August. 'Tis felt for thee.

Too well I know thy gentleness of soul,
 Melting as babes; ev'n now the pressure's on thee,
 And bends thy loveliness to earth. O, child!
 The dear, but sad foretaste of thy affliction
 Already kills thy mother. But, behold,
 Behold thy valiant followers, who to thee,
 And to the faith of thy protecting arm,
 Have giv'n ten thousand mothers, daughters too,
 Who in thy virtue yet may learn to bear
 Millions of free-born sons to bless thy name,
 And pray for their deliverer. Oh, farewell!
 This, and but this, the very last, adieu!
 Heav'n fit victorious on thy arm, my son,
 And give thee to thy merits.

Crist. Ah, thou trait'ers!

Gustava. O, brother! an't you stronger than that man?
 Don't let him take my mother.

Augusta. See, Gustavus;
 My little captive waits for one embrace.

Guf. Come to my arms, thou lamb-like sacrifice;
 Oh, that they were of force to hold thee ever,
 To let thee to my heart, there lock thee close,
 And circle thee with life! But 'twill not be.

Gustava. I'll stay with you, my brother.

Guf. Killing innocence!

That I was born to see this hour!

The pains of hell are on me! Take her, mother.

Gustava. I will not part with you; indeed I will not.

Guf. Take her—Distraction! Haste, my dearest mother;
 Oh!—else I shall run mad—quite mad—and save ye.

Arv. Hold, Madam—Hear me, thou most dear Gusta-
 Thus low I bend my pray'r; reject me not: [vus!
 If once, if ever thou didst love Arvida,
 Oh, leave me here to answer to the wrath

Of this fell tyrant ! Save thy honour'd mother,
And that sweet lamb from slaughter.

Guf. Cruel friendship !

Crist. And, by my life, I'd take thee at thy word,
Thou doubly damn'd ! but that I know 'twould please thee.

Augusta. No, gen'rous Prince ; thy blood shall never be
The price of our dishonour. Come, my child ; [thee.
Weep not, sweet babe ; there shall no harm come nigh

Crist. 'Tis well, proud dame ; you are return'd, I see.
Each to his charge. Here break we off, Gustavus ;
For to the very teeth of thy rebellion
We dash defiance back.

Guf. Alas, my mother !

Grief choaks up utterance ; else I have to say
What never tongue unfolded——Yet return,
Come back, and I will give up all to save thee :
For on the cov'ring of thy sacred head
My heart drops blood. Thou fountain of my life !
Dearer than mercy is to kneeling penitence,
My early blessing, first and latest joy,
Return, return, and save thy lost Gustavus !

Crist. No more, thou trifer !

Augusta. Oh, farewell for ever !

[*Exeunt Cristiern and his party. Gustavus and his party remain.*

Guf. Then she is gone——Arvida ! Anderson !
For ever gone——Arnoldus, friends, where are ye ?
Help here ! heave, heave this mountain from me——Oh !——
Heav'n keep my senses !——So——We will to battle :
But let no banners wave——Be still, thou trump,
And ev'ry martial sound that gives the war
To pomp or levity ; for vengeance now
Is clad with heavy arms, sedately stern,
Resolv'd, but silent as the slaughter'd heaps
O'er which my soul is brooding.

Arn. Oh, Gustavus !

Is there a Swede of us, whose sword and soul
Grapples not to thee, as to all they hold
Of earthly estimation ? Said I more,
It were but half my thought.

And. On thee we gaze,
As one unknown till this important hour ;
Pre-eminent of men !

Siv. Accurs'd be he,
Who, in thy leading, will not fight, and strive,
And bleed, and gasp with pleasure!

And. We are thine,
All, all, both we and ours; whom thou this day
Hast dearly purchas'd.

Arn. Tho', to yield us up,
Had scarce been less than virtue.

Guf. Oh, my friends!
I see 'tis not for man to boast his strength
Before the trial comes. This very hour,
Had I a thousand parents, all seem'd light,
When weigh'd against my country; and, but now,
One mother seem'd of weight to poize the world,
Tho' conscious truth and reason were against her.
For, Oh, howe'er the partial passions sway,
High Heav'n assigns but one unbiass'd way;
Direct thro' ev'ry opposition leads,
Where shelves decline, and many a steep impedes.
Here hold we on, tho' thwarting fiends alarm,
Here hold we on, tho' devious fyrens charm;
In Heav'n's disposing pow'r events unite,
Nor aught can happen wrong to him who acts aright.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE, *the Royal Tent.*

Enter Cristina and Mariana.

CRISTINA.

HARK, Mariana! list—No, all is silent—
It was not fancy, sure—Didst thou hear aught?

Mar. Too plain, the voice of terror seiz'd my ear,
And my heart sinks within me.

Cristina. Oh, I fear
The war is now at work!—As winds, methought,
Long borne thro' hollow vaults, the sound approach'd;

One

One found, yet laden with a thousand notes
 Of fearful variation ; then it swell'd
 To distant shouts, now coming on the gale ;
 Again, borne backward with a parting groan,
 All sunk to horrid stillness.

Mar. Look, my Princess ;
 Ah, no ! withhold thy eyes ! the place grows dark,
 A sudden cloud of sorrow stains the day,
 And throws its gloom around.

Enter four slaves as bearing the bodies of Augusta and Gustava on a bier covered ; four women, in chains, follow weeping.

Cristina. Whence are you, say, you daughters of affliction ?
 Their speech is in their tears—Avert, ye saints, [tion ?
 Avert that thought!—Soft—hold ye ! I've a tear
 For ev'ry mourner—Ah ! [Looks under the covering.

Mar. What mean you, Madam ?

Cristina. Reflection, come not there---See it not, eyes !
 How art thou split, thou blood of royalty !
 Close at the paleness of its parent-breast
 The babe lies slaughter'd. Tell me, who did this ?
 No, hold ye—Say not that my father did it ;
 For duty then turns rebel. Cruel father !
 Oh, that some villager, whose early toil
 Lifts the penurious morsel to his mouth,
 Had claim'd my birth ! Ambition had not then
 Thus stepp'd 'twixt me and heav'n.

Mar. Go, bear it hence——
 Turn, turn, my royal mistress.

Cristina. Ah, Augusta !
 Among thy foes thou'rt fall'n ; thou'rt fall'n in virtue.
 Exalt thyself, O Guilt ! for here the good
 Have none who may lament them. Sit we down ;
 For I grow weary of the world ; let Death
 Within his vaulty durance, dark and still,
 Receive me too ; and where th' afflicted rest,
 There fold me in for ever.

Enter Laertes.

Laer. Arise, Cristina ; fly, thou royal virgin !
 This morn beheld thee mistress of the North,
 Bright heir of Scandinavia ; and this hour

Has left thee not, throughout thy wide dominions,
Whereon to rest thy foot.

Cristina. Now, praise to Heav'n!

Say but my father lives——

Laer. At your command

I went; and, from a neighb'ring summit, view'd
Where either host stood adverse, sternly wedg'd,
Reflecting on each other's gloomy front
Fell hate and fix'd defiance. When at once
The foe mov'd on, attendant to the steps
Of their Gustavus—He, with mournful pace,
Came slow and silent; till two hapless Danes
Prick'd forth, and on his helm discharg'd their fury:
Then rouz'd the lion—To my wond'ring sight
His stature grew twofold; before his eye
All force seem'd wither'd, and his horrid plume
Shook wild dismay around; as Heav'n's dread bolt
He shot; he pierc'd our legions; in his strength
His shouting squadron gloried, rushing on
Where'er he led the battle. Full five times,
Hemm'd by our mightier host, the foe seem'd lost,
And swallow'd from my sight; five times again
Like flame they issued to the light; and thrice
These eyes beheld him; they beheld Gustavus
Unhors'd, and by a host girt singly in,
And thrice he broke through all.

Cristina. My blood runs chill.

Laer. With such a strenuous, such a labour'd conflict,
Sure never field was fought! until Gustavus
Aloud cry'd, Victory! and on his spear
Rear'd high th' imperial diadem of Denmark.
Then slack'd the battle, then recoil'd our host;
His echo'd, victory! and now would know
No bounds; rout follow'd, and the face of fight——
She heeds me not.

Cristina. Oh, ill-starr'd royalty!

My father! cruel, dear, unhappy father!
Summon'd so sudden! fearful, fearful thought!
Step in, sweet mercy! for thy time was——Ha!

Enter Cristiern, flying, without his helmet, in disorder, his sword broken, and his garments bloody; he throws away his sword, and speaks.

Crist. Give us new arms of proof; fresh horses, quick!
A watch without there—Set a standard up,
To guide our scatter'd powers—Haste, my friends, haste!
We must begone—Oh, for some cooling stream,
To slake a monarch's thirst!

Laer. A post, my liege,
A second post from Denmark says——

Crist. All's lost.

Is it not so? Begone! Perdition choak thee——
Give me a moment's solitude—Thought, thought,
Where wouldst thou lead?

Cristina. He sees me not—Alas, alas, my father!
Oh, what a war there lives within his eye!
Where greatness struggles to survive itself.
I tremble to approach him; yet I fain
Would bring peace to him—Don't you know me, Sir?
My father! look upon me: look, my father!
Why strains your lip, and why that doubtful eye,
Thro' fury melting o'er me? Turn, ah, turn!
I cannot bear its softness——How! nay, then,
'There is a falling dagger in that tear,
'To kill thy child, to murder thy Cristina.

Crist. Then thou'rt Cristina.

Cristina. Yes.

Crist. My child?

Cristina. I am.

Crist. Curse me, then, curse me! join with heav'n, and
And hell, to curse! [earth,

Cristina. Alas! on me, my father,
Thy curses be on me; but on thy head
Fall blessings from that Heav'n which has this day
Preserv'd thy life in battle.

Crist. What have I

To do with Heav'n? Damnation! What am I?
All frail and transient as my laps'd dominions!
Ev'n now the solid earth prepares to slide
from underneath me. Nature's pow'r cries out,
Leave him, thou universe!—No—Hold me, Heav'n!

Hold

Hold me, thou heav'n whom I've forsaken—hold
Thy creature, tho' accurs'd!

Cristina. Patience and peace
Possess thy mind! Not all thy pride of empire
E'er gave such blest'd sensation, as one hour
Of penitence, tho' painful—Let us hence—
Far from the blood and bustle of ambition.
Be it my task to watch thy rising wish,
To smooth thy brow, find comfort for thy cares;
And for thy will, obedience; still to cheer
The day with smiles, and lay the nightly down
Beneath thy slumbers.

Crist. O thou all that's left me!
Ev'n in the riot, in the rage of fight,
Thy guardian virtues watch'd around my head,
When else no arm could aid—for thro' my ranks,
My circling troops, the fell Gustavus rush'd;
Vengeance! He cry'd, and with one eager hand
Grip'd fast my diadem—his other arm,
High rear'd the deathful steel—suspended yet;
For in his eye, and thro' his varying face,
Conflicting passions fought—he look'd—he stood
In wrath reluctant—Then, with gentler voice;
Cristina, thou hast conquer'd! Go, he cry'd,
I yield thee to her virtues.

Enter Trollio and Guards, swords drawn.

Troll. Haste, O King!
The foe hath hem'd us round; O haste to save
Thyself and us!

Crist. Thy sword. [*Takes a sword from one of the Guards.*]

Troll. What means my—

Crist. Villain!

Well thought, by hell! Ha! Yes,—thou art our minister,
The rev'rend monitor of vice—the foil,
Baneful and rank with ev'ry principle,
Whence grow the crimes of Kings. First perish thou!

[*Stabs him.*]

Who taught the throne of pow'r to fix on fear,
And raise its safety, from the public ruin;
Fall thou into the gulph thyself hast fix'd
Between the Prince and people; cutting off
Communion from the ear of royalty,

And mercy from complaint—away, away,
Thy death, old man, be on thy monarch's head ;
On thine, the blood of all thy countrymen,
Who fell beneath thy counsels.

[*Exeunt.*

Trollio attempts to rise and then speaks.

Troll. Thou bloody tyrant ! late, too late I find,
Nor faith, nor gratitude, nor friendly trust,
No force of obligations can subsist
Between the guilty—Oh, let none aspire
To be a King's convenience ! Has he virtues,
Those are his own ; his vices are his minister's.
Who dares to step 'twixt envy and the throne,
Alike to feel the caprice of his Prince,
As public detestation.—Ha ! I'm going
But whither ? No one near ! to feel ! to catch !
The world but for an instant ! for one ray
To guide my soul ! Her way grows wond'rous dark,
And down, down, down !

[*Dies.*

Enter Gustavus, Anderson, Arnoldus, Sivard, &c. in triumph. Gustavus advances, and the rest range themselves on each side of the stage.

Guf. That we have conquer'd, first we bend to heav'n !

And. And next to thee !

All. To thee, to thee, Gustavus !

Guf. No, matchless men ; my brothers of the war !
Be it my greatest glory to have mix'd
My arms with yours, and to have fought for once
Like to a Dalecarlian ; like to you,
The fires of honour, of a new-born fame,
To be transmitted, from your great memorial,
To climes unknown, to age succeeding age,
'Till time shall verge upon eternity,
And patriots be no more—

Arn. Behold, my Lord,

The Danish pris'ners, and the traitor Peterfon,
Attend their fate.

Guf. Send home the Danes with honour,
And let them better learn, from our example,
To treat whom next they conquer, with humanity.

And. But then for Peterfon !

Guf.

Guf. His crimes are great :

A single death were a reward for treason :
Let him still languish—Let him be exil'd.
No more to see the land of liberty,
The hills of Sweden, nor the native fields
Of known, endear'd idea.

And. Royal Sir,

This is to pardon, to encourage villains ;
And hourly to expose that sacred life,
Where all our safety centers :

Guf. Fear them not.

The fence of virtue is a chief's best caution ;
And the firm surety of my people's hearts
Is all the guard that e'er shall wait *Gustavus*.
I am a soldier from my youth ; yet, *Anderson*,
These wars, where man must wound himself in man,
Have somewhat shocking in them : trust me, friend,
Except in such a cause as this day's quarrel,
I wou'd not shed a single wretch's blood
For the world's empire !

Arn. O exalted Sweden !

Bless'd people ! Heav'n ! wherein have we deserv'd
A man like this to rule us ?

Enter Arvida leading in Cristina. He runs to Gustavus.

Guf. My *Arvida* !

Arv. My King ! O hail ! Thus let me pay my ho-
mage.

Guf. Rise, rise, nor shame our friendship. [*Kneels.*

Arv. See, *Gustavus* ! Behold, nor longer wonder at my [*frailty:*

Guf. Be faithful, eyes ! Ha ! Yes, it must be so.

'Tis she—For Heav'n would chuse no other form
Wherein to treasure every mental virtue.

Cristina. Renown'd *Gustavus* ! mightiest among men !
If such a wretch, the captive of thy arms,
Trembling and aw'd in thy superior presence,
May find the grace that ev'ry other finds,
For thou art said to be of wond'rous goodness !
Then hear, and O excuse a foe's presumption !
While low, thus low you see a suppliant child,
Now pleading for a father, for a dear,
Much lov'd ; if cruel, yet unhappy father.

O, let him 'scape; who ne'er can wrong thee more!
 If he with circling nations could not stand
 Against thee single; singly, what can he,
 When thou art fenc'd with nations?

Guf. Ha! that posture!

O rise—surpriz'd, my eye perceiv'd it not.
 Cristina! thou all form'd for excellence!
 I've much to say, but that my tongue, my thoughts
 Are troubled; warr'd on by unusual passions.
 'Twas hence thou had'st it in thy power to ask,
 'Ere I could offer—Come, my friend, assist,
 Instruct me to be grateful. O Cristina!
 I fought for freedom, not for crowns, thou fair one,
 They shall sit brighter on that beauteous head,
 Whose eye might awe the monarchs of the earth,
 And light the world to virtue—My Arvida!

Arw. O great and good, and glorious to the last!
 I read thy soul, I see the gen'rous conflict,
 And come to fix, not trouble thy repose.
 Cou'd you but know with what an eager haste
 I sprung to execute thy late commands;
 To shield this lovely object of thy cares,
 And give her thus, all beauteous to thy eyes!
 For I've no blifs but thine, have lost the form
 Of ev'ry wish that's foreign to thy happiness.
 But, O, my King! my conqu'rer! my Gustavus!
 It grieves me much that thou must shortly mourn,
 Ev'n on the day in which thy country's freed.
 That crowns thy arms with conquest and Cristina.

Guf. Alas! your cheek is pale—You bleed, my bro-
Arw. I do indeed—to death. [ther!

Guf. You have undone me:

Rash, headstrong man! O was this well, Arvida?

[Turns from hsm.

Arw. Pardon, Gustavus! mine's the common lot,
 The fate of thousands fall'n this day in battle.
 I had resolv'd on life, to see you bless'd;
 To see my King and his Cristina happy.
 Turn, thou beloved, thou honour'd next to heav'n!
 And to thy arms receive a penitent,
 Who never more shall wrong thee.

Guf.

Guf. O Arvida!

Friend! Friend!

[*Turns and embraces him.*]

Arv. Thy heart beats comfort to me! in this breast,
Let thy Arvida, let thy friend survive.

O, strip his once lov'd image of its frailties,
And strip it too of ev'ry fonder thought,
That may give thee affliction——Do, Gustavus;
It is my last request; for heav'n and thou
Art all the care and business—of Arvida. [Dies.]

Guf. Friend! brother! speak—He's gone—and here
That's left of him who was my life's best treasure. [is all
How art thou fall'n, thou greatly valiant man!

In ruin graceful, like the warrior spear
Tho' shiver'd in the dust—so fall Gustavus—
But thou art sped, hast reach'd the goal before me;
And one light lapse throughout thy course in virtue
Shews only thou wert man, ordain'd to strive,
But not attain perfection.—

Dost thou too weep? transcendent, loveliest maid!
Pardon a heart o'ercharg'd with swelling grief,
That in thy presence will not be exil'd,
Tho' ev'ry joy dwells round thee.

Cris. O Gustavus!

A bosom pure like thine must soon regain
The heart-felt happiness that dwells with virtue;
And heav'n on all exterior circumstance
Shall pour the balm of peace, shall pay thee back
The bliss of nations, breathing on thy head
The sweets that live within the pray'rs of foes
Subdued unto thy merits—fare, farewell!

Guf. Thou shalt not part, Cristina.

Cristina. O—I must—

Guf. No, thou art all that's left to sweeten life,
And reconcile the wearied to the world.

Cristina. It will not be——I dare not hear——

Guf. You must.

I am thy suppliant in my turn—but O
My suit is more, much more than life or empire,
Than man can merit, or worlds give without thee.

[*Cristina.* Now aid me, aid me, all ye chaster pow'rs
That guard a woman's weakness!—'tis resolv'd—
Thy own example charms thy suit to silence.

Nor think alone to bear the palm of virtue,
 Thou, who hast taught the world, when duty calls,
 To throw the bar of ev'ry wish behind them.
 Exalted in that thought, like thee I rise,
 While ev'ry less'ning passion sinks beneath me.
 Adieu, adieu, most honour'd, first of men,
 I go, I part, I fly, but to deserve thee.

Gus. Yet stay—a moment—till my utt'ring heart
 Pour forth in love, in wonder pour before thee.
 Thou cruel excellence—Wou'dst thou too leave me?
 Not if the heart, the arms of thy Gustavus
 Have force to hold thee.

Cristina. O delightful notes!
 That I do love thee, yes, 'tis true, my Lord,
 The bond of virtue, friendship's sacred tie,
 The lover's pains, and all the sister's fondness,
 Mine has the flame of ev'ry love within it;
 But I have a father, guilty if he be,
 Yet is he old; if cruel, yet a father.
 Abandon'd now by ev'ry supple wretch
 That fed his years with flattery. I am all
 That's left to calm, to sooth his troubled soul,
 To penitence, to virtue; and perhaps
 Restore the better empire o'er his mind,
 True seat of all dominion—Yet, Gustavus,
 Yet there are mightier reasons—O farewell!
 Had I ne'er lov'd I might have stay'd with honour.

[*Exit.*

Gustavus looks after Cristina, then turns and looks on Arvida,
 —Anderson, Arnoldus, &c. advance.

And. Behold, my Lord, behold the sons of war,
 Of triumph, turn'd to tears; while from that eye
 All Sweden takes her fate; and smiles around,
 Or weeps with her Gustavus.

Arn. Wilt thou not cheer them, say, thou great de-
Siv. O General!

[*liv'rer*]

1st Dale. King!

2d Dale. Brother!

3d Dale. Father!

All. Friend!

Gus.

Guf. Come, come, my brothers all, yes I will striye
To be the sum of every title to you ;
And you shall be my fire, my friend reviv'd,
My sister, mother, all that's kind and dear,
For so Gustavus holds ye — O I will
Of private passions all my soul divest,
And take my dearer country to my breast.
To publick good transfer each fond desire,
And clasp my Sweden with a lover's fire.
Well pleas'd, the weight of all her burdens bear ;
Dispense all pleasure, but engross all care.
Still quick to find, to feel my people's woes,
And wake that millions may enjoy repose.



A TRAGI-COMIC
EPILOGUE,

By Way of ENTERTAINMENT.

By Mr. OGLE.

Intended for *Mr. Wright, Mrs. Giffard, and Mrs. Clive.*

Mr. WRIGHT.

*WELL, Ladies, to the court your plea submit,
Box, Upper-Region, Gallery, and Pit.*

*Our poet, trembling for his first essay,
Fear'd to dismiss you, tho' you sav'd his play.*

*Cry'd Nell (in pity for the bashful rogue)
' Give 'em a joke! a joke was once in vogue!*

' Thus authors us'd, in less judicious times,

' When merry epilogues were thought no crimes.

' That (said Cristina) wou'd his ruin crown;

' Nothing, but virtue, takes this virtuous town.

' No! let his epilogue be clean and chaste.

' This is the sense of ev'ry man of taste! —'

*High rose the conflict in our room of state,
Where tragic Kings and Queens maintain debate;
When, lo! we heard, "your powers began to rise,"
Whose horrid cat-call is our worst excise!*

Our inmost palace felt the loud dissention;

Where each new tragedy's a new convention.

Whence we determin'd without further pother,

To give you, of the one, and of the other.

Mrs. GIFFARD.

*Our author on the brave and chaste relies;
He thinks, the virtuous are the only wise.*

*And, if his muse, with voice exalted, sings,
Of camps and courts, of ministers and kings,*

Yet, be not, to the great, his rules confin'd!
 His moral is a lesson to mankind.
 If virtue, beauteous; vice, deform'd, be draws;
 You, that applaud him, sound your own applause.
 Where vice, distaste, where virtue, gives delight,
 Alike, who judge or paint, are just and right.

Virtue, like vice, escapes the public eye,
 In humble life, yet blazes in the high.
 Hence, tragedy, that owns no vulgar flight,
 Shines, with the King, in a mild sphere of light,
 Or vagrant, with the tyrant, strains to run,
 A burning comet—not a cheering sun!
 That worth is worth, be by Gustavus known:
 More glorious in a mine, than on a throne!
 And, for Cristina, might I hope a smile,
 Less great was she in empire than exile!
 Some worth it shows, to aim at worthy praise.—
 Then, wither not the plant that you may raise!
 Crush not his youth? No!--give him age to spread!
 For we have heard you rumbling o'er his head.
 Fell a few flashes, with portentous blaze,
 To blast th' ambitious branches of his bays;
 Yet, if soft sorrows stream'd from virtuous eyes,
 If rose, from gen'rous breasts, regaling sighs:
 Refresh'd by the attack, the laurel stands,
 And dares the loudest thunder---of your hands.

Mrs. CLIVE.

Great the design!--I grant—the moral, good!
 But, 'tis my weakness, I am flesh and blood.
 What virgin, here, so tender and so kind,
 Wou'd not her love, with her own hands, unbind?
 Preliminaries settle in the dark,
 And, tho' she lost her father, fix her spark?
 Or, when she bade th' attendant, ' Save him! Fly!'
 Wou'd she not send, a billet, by-the-by?
 Not article? 'Tis nonsense to say, Not!
 Had she no feel, no guess, of what-is-what?
 At her expence, the great Gustavus shines;
 My lover, he!-- I'd send him to the mines.-----
 Arvida falls!--Gustavus wails his end!
 And many a spouse caresses such a friend.

Well,

Well, let him wail his death; then, rise to life;
 Clasp the fond maid, too strict to be his wife!
 He held her in his camp; might hold, alone:
 Compulsion some humanity had shown.
 Thy countrymen---will damn thee---thy third day---
 This is not, sure, the true Hibernian way?

But, I forgive him. He's a young beginner!
 Not quite a prostitute! And yet, a sinner!
 Forward, to please! Yet awkward, to delight!
 He wants a kindly hand to guide him right!
 A novice yet---Instruct him---He will mend---
 Full many a widow wishes such a friend?
 Ew'n marry'd dames may think a greater curse
 The slow performer, that grows worse-and-worse!
 This, with a blush, I say, behind my fan---
 Cherish the boy, you'll raise him to a man!

MR. WRIGHT.

The cause is heard. Ye gentle, and ye brave,
 'Tis yours to damn him---But, you join to save---
 Then, hail Gustavus, who his country freed!
 Ye sons of Britain, praise, the glorious Swede!
 Who, bravely rais'd; and generously releas'd,
 From blood-stain'd tyrant, and perfidious priest,
 The state and church expiring, at a breath!
 Who held a life of slav'ry worse than death!
 Reform'd religion! re-establish'd law!
 ---And, that you dare to praise him, hail Nassau!---





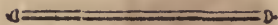
J. Roberts del:

Published for Bells British Theatre Jan: 1778.

Thornhill sc.

M^{rs} HUNTER in the Character of PENELOPE
And see! the shade of my much injured Son

BELL'S EDITION.



U L Y S S E S.

A TRAGEDY.

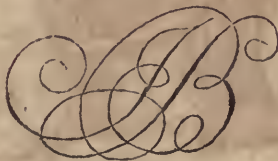
As written by N. ROWE, Esq.

AND PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

*Stulterum regum & populorum continet ætus---
Rursus quid virtus, & quid sapientia possit
Utile proposuit nobis exemplar Ulysseni.*

HORAT. Epist. Lib. 1. Epist. 2.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVIII.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIDNEY Lord GODOLPHIN,

Lord High-Treasurer of England, and Knight of
the most Noble Order of the Garter.

MY LORD,

IF those cares in which the service of a great Queen, and the love of your country, have so justly engaged your Lordship, would allow any leisure to run back and remember those arts and studies, which were once the grace and entertainment of your Lordship's youth; I have presumption enough to hope, that this tragedy may, some time or other, find an hour to divert your Lordship. Poetry, which was so venerable to former ages, as in many places to make a part of their religious worship, and every where to be had in the highest honour and esteem, has miserably languished and been despised, for want of that favour and protection which it found in the famous Augustan age. Since then, it may be asserted without any partiality to the present time, it never had a fairer prospect of lifting up its head, and returning to its former reputation than now: and the best reason can be given for it, is, that it seems to have a particular hope from, and dependence upon your Lordship, and to expect all just encouragement, when those great men, who have the power to protect it, have so delicate and polite a taste and understanding of its true value. The restoring and preserving any part of learning, is so generous an action in itself, that it naturally falls into your Lordship's

province, since every thing that may serve to improve the mind, has a right to the patronage of so great and universal a genius for knowledge as your Lordship's. It is indeed a piece of good fortune, upon which I cannot help congratulating the present age, that there is so great a man, at a time when there is so great an occasion for him. The divisions which your Lordship has healed, the temper which you have restored to our councils, and that indefatigable care and diligence which you have used in preserving our peace at home, are benefits so virtuously and so seasonably conferred upon your country, as shall draw the praises of all wise men, and the blessings of all good men upon your Lordship's name. And when those unreasonable feuds and animosities, which keep faction alive, shall be buried in silence and forgotten, that great public good shall be universally acknowledged, as the happy effect of your Lordship's most equal temper and right understanding. That this glorious end may very suddenly succeed to your Lordship's candor and generous endeavours after it, must be the wish of every good Englishman. I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Humble servant,

N. ROWE.

P R O L O G U E.

TO-night, in honour of the marry'd life,
 Our author treats you with a virtuous wife;
 A lady, who, for twenty years, withstood
 The pressing instances of flesh and blood;
 Her husband, still a man of sense reputed,
 (Unless this tale his wisdom have confuted,)
 Lest her at ripe eighteen, to seek renown,
 And battle for a harlot at Troy town;
 To fill his place, fresh lovers came in shoals,
 Much such as now-a-days are Cupid's tools,
 Some men of wit, but the most part were fools.
 They sent her billets-doux, and presents many,
 Of ancient tea and Thericlean china;
 Rail'd at the gods, toasted her o'er and o'er,
 Dress'd at her, danc'd and fought, and sigh'd, and swore;
 In short, did all that men could do to have her,
 And damn'd themselves to get into her favour;
 But all in vain, the virtuous dame stood buff,
 And let them know that she was coxcomb proof:
 Messieurs the beaux, what think you of the matter?
 Don't you believe old Homer given to flatter?
 When you approach, and pressing the soft hand,
 Favours, with well-bred impudence, demand,
 Is it in woman's weakness to withstand?
 Cease to be vain, and give the sex their due;
 Our English wives shall prove this story true:
 We have our chaste Penelope's, who mourn
 Their widow'd beds, and wait their lord's return;
 We have our heroes too, who bravely bear,
 Far from their home, the dangers of the war;
 Who careless of the winter season's rage,
 New toils explore, and in new cares engage;
 From realm to realm their chief unweary'd goes,
 And restless journies on, to give the world repose.
 Such are the constant labours of the sun,
 Whose active, glorious course is never done;
 And though, when hence he parts, with us 'tis night,
 Still he goes on, and lends to other worlds his light.
 Ye beauteous nymphs, with open arms prepare
 To meet the warriors, and reward their care;
 May you for ever kind and faithful prove,
 And pay their days of toil with nights of Love.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Ulyſes, king of *Ithaca*, concealed for
ſome time under the name of *Æthon*.

Eurymachus, king of *Samos*.

Polydamas,

Thoön,

Agenor,

Ephialtes,

} Neighbouring princes,
pretenders to the Queen.

Telemachus, ſon to *Ulyſſes* and *Penelope*.

Antinous, a nobleman of *Ithaca*, ſe-
cretly in love with the Queen.

Cleon,

Arcas,

} Friends to *Antinous*.

Mentor, tutor to *Telemachus*.

Eumæus, an old ſervant, and faithful to
Ulyſſes.

Ceraunus, a *Samian* officer belonging to
Eurymachus.

W O M E N.

Penelope, queen of *Ithaca*,

Mrs. Hunter.

Semanthe, daughter to *Eurymachus*.

Several *Samian* and *Ithacan* Officers and Soldiers, with
other Attendants, Men and Women.

S C E N E, I T H A C A.

ULYSSES.

U L Y S S E S.

A C T I.

S C E N E, *a Palace.**Enter Telemachus and Mentor.*

TELEMACHUS.

O H, Mentor ! urge no more my royal birth,
 Urge not the honours of my race divine,
 Call not to my remembrance what I am,
 Born of Ulyſſes, and deriv'd from Jove ;
 For 'tis the curse of mighty minds oppress'd,
 To think what their state is, and what it should be ;
 Impatient of their lot, they reason fiercely,
 And call the laws of Providence unequal.

Men. And therefore wert thou bred to virtuous know-
 And wisdom early planted in thy soul ; [ledge,
 That thou might'st know to rule thy fiery passions,
 To bind their rage, and stay their headlong course,
 To bear with accidents, and ev'ry change
 Of various life, to struggle with adversity,
 To wait the leisure of the righteous gods,
 Till they, in their own good appointed hour,
 Shall bid thy better days come forth at once,
 A long and shining train ; till thou, well-pleas'd,
 Shalt bow, and bless thy fate, and own the gods are just.

Tel. Thou prudent guide and father of my youth,
 Forgive my transports, if I seem to lose
 The rev'rence to thy sacred precepts due :
 'Tis a just rage, and honest indignation.
 Ten years ran round e'er Troy was doom'd to fall ;
 Ten tedious summers, and ten winters more,
 By turns, have chang'd the seasons since it fell ;
 And yet we mourn my godlike father's absence,
 As if the Grecian arms had ne'er prevail'd,
 But Jove and Hector still maintain'd the war.

Men.

Men. Tho' absent, yet if oracles are true,
He lives, and shall return. Where'er he wanders,
Pursu'd by hostile Trojan gods, in peril
Of the waste desert, or the foamy deep,
Or nations wild as both, yet courage, wisdom,
And Pallas, guardian of his arms, is with him.

Tel. And, Oh, to what does the god's care reserve him?
Where is the triumph shall go forth to meet him?
What Pæan shall be sung to bless his labours?
What voice of joy shall cry, Hail King of Ithaca?
Riot, and wrong, and woful desolation,
Spread o'er the wretched land, shall blast his eyes,
And make him curse the day of his return.

Men. Your guest, the stranger, Æthon.

Enter Æthon.

Tel. By my life,
And by the great Ulysses, truly welcome.
Oh, thou most worthy Æthon! thou that wert,
In youth, companion of my father's arms,
And partner of his heart, does it not grieve thee,
To see the honour of his royal name
Despis'd and set at nought, his state o'er-run,
Devour'd and parcell'd out by slaves so vile,
That if oppos'd to him, 'twould make comparison
Absurd and monstrous seem, as if to mate
A mole-hill with Olympus?

Æth. He was my friend;
I think I knew him; and, to do him right,
He was a man indeed. Not as these are,
A rioter, or doer of foul wrongs;
But boldly just, and more like what man should be.

Tel. From morn till noon, from noon till the shades dar-
From evening till the morning dawns again, [ken
Lewdness, confusion, insolence, and uproar,
Are all the bus'ness of their guilty hours;
The cries of maids enforc'd, the roar of drunkards,
Mix'd with the braying of the minstrels' noise,
Who ministers to mirth, ring thro' the palace,
And echo to the arch of heav'n their crimes.
Behold, ye gods, who judge betwixt your creatures,
Behold the rivals of the great Ulysses!

Men. Doubt not but all their crimes, and all thy wrongs
Are

Are judg'd by Nemesis and equal Jove.
Suffer the fools to laugh and loll secure ;
This is their day ; but there is one behind
For vengeance and Ulysses.

Eth. Till that day,
That day of recompence and righteous justice,
Learn thou, my son, the cruel arts of courts ;
Learn to dissemble wrongs, to smile at injuries,
And suffer crimes thou want'st the power to punish ;
Be easy, affable, familiar, friendly,
Search, and know all mankind's mysterious ways ;
But trust the secret of thy soul to none.
Believe me, seventy years, and all the sorrows
That seventy years bring with them, thus have taught me,
Thus only, to be safe in such a world as this is.

Enter Antinous.

Ant. Hail to thee, Prince ! thou son of great Ulysses,
Offspring of gods, most worthy of thy race ;
May ev'ry day like this be happy to thee,
Fruition and success attend thy wishes,
And everlasting glory crown thy youth,

Tel. Thou greet'st me like a friend. Come near, An-
May I believe that omen of my happiness, [tinous ;
That joy which dances in thy chearful eyes ?
Or dost thou, for thou know'st my fond, fond heart,
Dost thou betray me to deceitful hopes,
And sooth me, like an infant, with a tale
Of some felicity, some dear delight,
Which thou didst never purpose to bestow ?

Ant. By Cytherea's altar, and her doves,
By all the gentle fires that burn before her,
I have the kindest sounds to bless your ear with,
Nay, and the truest too, I'll swear, I think,
That ever love and innocence inspir'd.

Tel. Ha ! from Semanthe ?

Ant. From the fair Semanthe,
The gentle, the forgiving——

Tel. Soft, my Antinous,
Keep the dear secret safe ; wisdom and age
Reason perversely when they judge of love.
A bus'ness of a moment calls me hence, [To Mentor.
That ended, I'll attend the Queen ; till then,

Mentor,

Mentor, the noble stranger is thy care—
 Fly with me to some safe, some sacred privacy, [To Ant.
 There charm my senses with Semanthe's accents,
 There pour thy balm into my love-sick soul,
 And heal my cares for ever. [Exeunt Tel. and Ant.

Æth. This smooth speaker,
 This supple courtier, is in favour with you.
 Mark'd you the Prince, how at this man's approach
 'The fierceness, rage, and pride of youth declin'd,
 His changing visage wore a form more gentle,
 And ev'ry feature took a softer turn ;
 As if his soul, bent on some new employment,
 Of different purpose from the thought before,
 Had summon'd other counsels, other passions,
 And dress'd her in a gay, fantastic garb,
 Fit for th' adventure which she meant to prove ?
 By Jove, I lik'd it not——

Men. The Prince, whose temper
 Is open as the day, and unsuspecting,
 Esteems him as devoted to his service,
 Wise, brave, and just ; and since his late return
 From Nestor's court at Pyle, he still has held him
 In more especial nearness to his heart.

Æth. 'Tis rash, and favours of unwary youth.
 Tell him, he trusts too far. If I mistook not,
 You said he was a wooer.

Men. True, he was ;
 Noble by birth, and mighty in his wealth,
 Proud of the patriot's name and people's praise,
 By gifts, by friendly offices, and eloquence,
 He won the herd of Ithacans to think him
 Ev'n worthy to supply his master's place.

Æth. Unthinking, changeable, ungrateful Ithaca !
 But, Mentor, say, the Queen, could she forget
 The difference 'twixt Ulysses and his slave ?
 Did not her soul resent the violation,
 And, spite of all the wrongs she labour'd under,
 Dash his ambition and presumptuous love ?

Men. Still great and royal in the worst of fortunes,
 With native power and majesty array'd,
 She aw'd this rash Ixion with her frown,
 Taught him to bend his abject head to earth,

And own his humbler lot. He stood rebuk'd,
 And full of guilty sorrow for the past,
 Vow'd to repeat the daring crime no more,
 But with humility and loyal service
 To purge his fame, and wash the stains away.

Æth. Deceit and artifice! the turn's too sudden;
 Habitual evils seldom change so soon,
 But many days must pass, and many sorrows,
 Conscious remorse and anguish must be felt,
 To curb desire, to break the stubborn will,
 And work a second nature in the soul,
 Ere Virtue can resume the place she lost;
 'Tis else dissimulation. But no more;
 The ruffling train of suitors are at hand,
 Those mighty candidates for love and empire!
 'Tis well the gods are mild, when these dare hope
 To merit their best gifts by riot and injustice.

Enter Polydamas, Agenor, Thoon, Ephialtes, and Attendants.

Pol. Our souls are out of tune, we languish all,
 Nor does the sweet returning of the dawn
 Cheer with its usual mirth our drowsy spirits,
 That droop'd beneath the lazy leaden night.

Agen. Can we, who swear we love, smile or be gay,
 When our fair queen, the goddess of our vows,
 She that adorns our mirth, and gilds our day,
 Withholds the beams that only can revive us?

Tho. Night must involve the world till she appear,
 The flowers in painted meadows hang their heads,
 The birds awake not to their morning songs,
 Nor early hinds renew their constant labour;
 Ev'n nature seems to slumber till her call,
 Regardless of th' approach of any other day.

Eph. Why is she then withheld, this public good?
 Why does she give those hours that should rejoice us,
 To tears, perverseness, and to sullen privacy,
 While vainly here we waste our lusty youth,
 In expectation of the uncertain blessing?

Pol. For twice two years this coy, this cruel beauty
 Has mock'd our hopes, and cross'd them with delays;
 At length the female artifice is plain,

The riddle of her mystic web is known,
Which ere her second choice she swore to weave;
While still the secret malice of the night
Undid the labours of the former day.

Agcn. Hard are the laws of love's despotic rule,
And ev'ry joy is trebly bought with pain;
Crown we the goblet then, and call on Bacchus,
Bacchus, the jolly god of laughing pleasures,
Bid ev'ry voice of harmony awake,
Apollo's lyre, and Hermes' tuneful shell;
Let wine and music join to swell the triumph,
To sooth uneasy thought, and lull desire.

Æth. Is this the rev'rence due to sacred beauty,
Or these the rights the Cyprian goddess claims?
These rude licentious orgies are for Satyrs,
And such the drunken homage which they pay
'To old Silenus nodding on his ass.
But be it as it may, it speaks you well.

Epb. What says the slave?

Tbo. Oh, 'tis the snarler, Æthon!
A privileg'd talker. Give him leave to rail;
Or send for Irus forth, his fellow droll,
And let them play a match of mirth before us,
And laughter be the prize to crown the victor.

Æth. And dost thou answer to reproof with laughter?
But do so still, and be what thou wert born;
Stick to thy native sense, and scorn instruction.
Oh, Folly! what an empire hast thou here!
What temples shall be rais'd to thee! what crowds,
Of slav'ring, hooting, senseless, shameful ideots:
Shall worship at thy ignominious altars,
While princes are thy priests!

Pol. Why shouldst thou think,
O'erweening, insolent, unmanner'd slave,
That wisdom does forsake the wealth, the honours,
And full prosperity of princes' courts,
To dwell with rags and wretchedness like thine?
Why dost thou call him fool?

Æth. Speech is most free;
It is Jove's gift to all mankind in common.
Why dost thou call me poor, and think me wretched?

Pol. Because thou art so.

Æth. Answer to thyself,
And let it serve for thee, and for thy friend.

Agen. He talks like oracles, obscure and short.

Æth. I would be understood; but apprehension
Is not thy talent— Midnight surfeits, wine,
And painful undigested morning fumes,
Have marr'd thy understanding.

Epb. Hence, thou miscreant!
My Lords, this railer is not to be borne.

Æth. And wherefore art thou borne, thou public grie-
Thou tyrant, born to be a nation's punishment; [vance,
To scourge thy guilty subjects for their crimes,
And prove Heaven's sharpest vengeance?

Epb. Spurn him hence,
And tear the rude unhallow'd railer's tongue
Forth from his throat.

Æth. If brutal violence,
And lust of foul revenge, should urge thee on,
Spite of the Queen and hospitable Jove,
T'oppress a stranger, single, and unarm'd,
Yet, mark me well, I was not born thy vassal;
And wert thou ten times greater than thou art,
And ten times more a king, thus would I meet thee,
Thus naked as I am, I would oppose thee,
And fight a woman's battle with my hands,
Ere thou shouldst do me wrong, and go unpunish'd.

Epb. Ha! dost thou brave me, dog? [*Coming up to Æth.*

Tho. Avaunt!

Pol. Begone!

Enter Eurymachus.

Eur. What daughter of old Chaos and the Night,
What fury loiters yet behind the shades,
To vex the peaceful morn with rage and uproar?
Each frowning visage doubly dy'd with wrath,
Your voices in tumultuous clamours rais'd,
Venting reproach, and stirring strong contention.
Say, have you been at variance?—Speak, ye Princes,
Whence grew th' occasion?

Æth. King of Samos, hear me.
To thee, as to a king, worthy the name,
The majesty and right divine of pow'r,
Boldly I dare appeal. This King of Seriphos,

[*Pointing to Epb.*
This

This island lord, this monarch of a rock,
 He, and his fellow-princes there, yon band
 Of eating, drinking lovers, have in scorn
 Of the gods' laws, and strangers' sacred privilege,
 Offer'd me foul offence, and most unmanly injuries.

Eur. Away! It is too much—You wrong your
 honours, [To the wooers.]

And stain the lustre of your royal names,
 To brawl and wrangle with a thing beneath you.
 Are we not chief on earth, and plac'd aloft?
 And when we poorly stoop to mean revenge,
 We stand debas'd, and level with the slave
 Who fondly dares us with his vain defiance.

Epb. Henceforward let the ribald railer learn
 To curb the lawless licence of his speech;
 Let him be dumb; we wo' not brook his prating.

Eur. Go to! you are too bitter. But no more. [To Æth.]
 Let ev'ry jarring sound of discord cease,
 Tune all your thoughts and words to beauty's praise,
 To beauty, that, with sweet and pleasant influence,
 Breaks like the day-star from the cheerful east;
 For see, where, circled with a crowd of fair-ones,
 Fresh as the spring, and fragrant as its flowers,
 Your queen appears, your goddess, your Penelope.

Enter the Queen, with Ladies, and other Attendants.

Diana thus on Cynthus' shady top,
 Or by Eurota's stream, leads to the chase
 Her virgin train, a thousand lovely nymphs,
 Of form celestial all, troop by her side;
 Amidst a thousand nymphs the goddess stands confess'd,
 In beauty, majesty, and port divine,
 Supreme and eminent.

Qu. If these sweet sounds,
 This humble sawning phrase, this faithless flattery,
 If these known arts could heal my wounded soul,
 Could recompense the sorrows of my days,
 Or sooth the sighings of my lonely nights,
 Well might you hope to wooe me to your wishes,
 And win my heart with your fond tales of love.
 But since whate'er I've suffer'd for my lord,
 From Troy, the winds and seas, the gods, and you,

Is deeply writ within my sad remembrance,
Know, Princes, all your eloquence is vain.

Agcn. If those bright eyes, that waste their lights with
Would kindly shine upon Agenor's hopes, [weeping,
Behold he offers to his charming Queen
His crown, his life, his ever-faithful vows,
What joys foe'er or love or empire yield,
To bless her future days, and make 'em happy all.

Pol. Accept my crown, and reign with me in Delos.

Tho. Mine, and the homage of my people wait you.

Epb. I cannot court you with a silken tale,
With easy ambling speeches, fram'd on purpose,
Made to be spoke in tune — But be my queen,
And leave my plain-spoke love to prove its merit.

Qu. And am I yet to learn your love, your faith?
Are not my wrongs gone up to heav'n against you?
Do they not stand before the throne of Jove,
And call incessant on his tardy vengeance?
What sun has shone that has not seen your insolence,
Your wasteful riot, and your impious mirth,
Your scorn of old Laertes' feeble age,
Of my son's youth, and of my woman's weakness?
Ev'n in my palace here, my latest refuge,
(For you are lords of all beside in Ithaca)
With ruffian vio'ence and murd'rous rage,
You menace the defenceless and the stranger,
And from th' unhospitable dwelling drive
Safety and friendly peace.

Ath. For me it matters not;

Wrong is the portion still of feeble age.
My toilsome length of days full oft has taught me
What 'tis to struggle with the proud and powerful:
But 'tis for thy unhappy fate, fair Queen,
'Tis to behold thy beauty and thy virtue,
Transcendant both, worthy the gods who gave them,
And worthy of their care, to see them left,
Abandon'd and forsaken, to rude outrage,
And made a prize for drunkards; 'tis for this
My soul takes fire within, and vainly urges
My cold enervate hand to assert thy cause.

Qu. Alas! they scorn the weakness of thy age,
As of my sex. — But mark me well, ye Princes!

Whoe'er amongst you dares to lift his hand
 Against the hoary head of this old man,
 This good old man, this friend of my Ulysses,
 Him will I hold my worst, my deadliest foe,
 Him shall my curses and revenge pursue,
 And mark him from the rest with most distinguish'd hatred.

Eph. That you are weak, defenceless, and oppress'd,
 Impute not to the gods, they have befriended you,
 With lavish hands they spread their gifts before you ;
 What pride, revenge, what wanton love of change,
 Or woman's wish can ask, behold, we offer you.
 Curse the perverseness of your stubborn will then,
 That has delay'd your choice, and in that choice your
 happiness.

Qu. And must I hear this still, and still endure it ?
 Oh, rage ! dishonour ! wretched, helpless Queen !
 Return, return, my hero, my Ulysses ;
 Bring him again, you cruel seas and winds ;
 Troy and adult'rous Paris are no more ;
 Restore him then, you righteous gods of Greece,
 T' avenge himself and me upon these tyrants,
 And do a second justice here at home.

Eur. Amongst the mighty manes of the Greeks,
 Great names, and fam'd for highest deeds in war,
 His honour'd shade rests from the toils of life,
 In everlasting indolence and ease,
 Careless of all your pray'rs and vain complainings, [ness.
 Which the winds bear away, and scatter in their wanton-
 Turn those bright eyes then from despair and death,
 And fix your better hopes among the living ;
 Fix them on one who dares, who can defend you,
 One worthy of your choice.

Qu. If my free soul
 Must stoop to this unequal hard condition,
 If I must make this second hated choice,
 Yet by connubial Juno, here I swear,
 None shall succeed my lord, but that brave man
 That dares avenge me well upon the rest.
 Then let whoever dares to love be bold,
 Be, like my former hero, made for war,
 Able to bend the bow, and toss the spear ;

For ev'ry wrong his injur'd Queen has found,
 Let him revenge and pay it with a wound;
 Fierce from the slaughter let the victor come,
 And tell me that my foes have met their doom;
 Then plight his faith upon his bloody sword,
 And be, what my Ulysses was, my best, my dearest lord.

[*Exeunt all but Æthon.*]

Æth. Oh, matchless proof of faith and love unchang'd!
 Lest in the pride, the wishing warmth of youth,
 For ten long years, and ten long years to that,
 And yet so true! Beset with strong allurements,
 With youth, proud pomp, and soft bewitching pleasure,
 'Tis wonderful! and wives in later times
 Shall think it all the forgery of wit,
 A fable curiously contriv'd t' upbraid
 Their fickle easy faith and mock them for their lightness.
 But see, the Samian King returns.

Enter Eurymachus.

Eur. I fought you
 Amidst the crowd of princes who attend
 The Queen to Juno's temple.

Æth. When I worship,
 And bow myself before the awful gods,
 I mingle not with those who scorn their laws,
 With raging, brutal, loose, voluptuous crowds,
 Who take the gods for gluttons like themselves.

Eur. This sullen garb, this moody discontent,
 Sits on thee well, and I applaud thy anger,
 Thy just disdain of this licentious rout:
 Yet all are not like these; nor ought thy quarrel
 Be carry'd on to all mankind in common.

Æth. Perhaps the untaught plainness of my words
 May make you think my manners rude and savage;
 But know, my country is the land of liberty;
 Phœacia's happy isle, that gave me birth,
 Forbids not any to speak plain and truly;
 Sincere and open are we, roughly honest,
 Upright in deed, tho' simple in our speech,
 As meaning not to flatter or offend;
 The use of words we have, but not the art;
 And ev'n as nature dictates, so we speak.

Eur. Now, by great Juno, guardian of our Samos,

In strong description hast thou well express'd
That manly virtue I would make a friend of.
Nor thou, brave Æthon, shalt disdain our amity,
Our proffer'd love; for know, that kings, like gods,
With all things good adorn their own creation,
And where their favour fixes, there is happiness.

Æth. Yes, Sir, you are a king, a great one too;
My humbler birth has cast me far beneath you,
And made me for the proffer'd grace unfit:
Friendship delights in equal fellowship,
Where parity of rank and mutual offices
Engage both sides alike, and keep the balance even.
'Tis irksome to a gen'rous, grateful soul,
To be oppress'd beneath a load of favours,
Still to receive, and run in debt to friendship,
Without the pow'r of paying something back.

Eur. I know thee grateful; just and gen'rous minds
Are always so; nor is thy pow'r so scanty,
But that it may vie with a king's munificence,
May make me large amends for all my bounty,
May bless me with a benefit I want,
And give me that which my soul most desires:
The Queen——

Æth. How, Sir, the Queen!

Eur. The beauteous Queen,
That summer-sun in full meridian glory,
Brighter than the faint promise of the spring,
With blessings ripen'd to the gath'rer's hand,
Mature for joy, and in perfection lovely;
Ev'n she!

The pride of Greece, the wish of youthful princes,
Severe, and cold, and rigid as she is,
Looks gently on thee, Æthon, she beholds thee
With kind regard, and listens to thy counsels. [go on.

Æth. Be still, thou beating heart! [*Aside.*] Well, Sir,

Eur. No more, there needs no more; thy piercing wit,
I read it in thy eyes, hath found my purpose.
Be favourable then, be friendly to me;
Nay, I'll conjure thee, by my hopes, by thine,
Whether they follow wealth, or power, or fame,
Or what desires soe'er warm thy old breast,
Counsel me, aid me, teach me, be my friend.

Æth.

Æth. Suppose me such, what should my friendship profit you?

Eur. Oh, by ten thousand ways! Has not that age
That turn'd thy rev'rend locks so silver white,
Has it not giv'n thee skill in woman-kind,
Sagacious wisdom to explore their subtleties,
Their coy averfions, and their eager appetites,
Their false denials, and their secret yieldings?
Yet more, thy friendship with her former lord
Gives thee a right to speak, and be believ'd.

Æth. Then you would have me wooe her for you, win
This queen, this wife of him that was my friend? [to her,

Eur. Thou speak'st me well; of him that was my friend.
His death has broke those bonds of love and friendship,
And left me free and worthy to succeed
Both in her heart and thine.

Æth. Excuse me, Sir,
Nor think I meant to question your high worth.
I am but ill at praising; or my tongue
Had spoke the great things that my heart thinks of you:
Suppose me wholly yours.—Yet do you hold
This sov'reign beauty made of such light stuff,
So like the common changelings of her sex,
That he that flatter'd, sigh'd, and spoke her fair,
Could win her from her stubborn resolution,
And chaste reservedness, with his sweet persuasion?

Eur. No, were she form'd like them, she were a conquest
Beneath a monarch's love, or Æthon's wit.
Not but I think she has her warmer wishes,
'Twere monstrous else, and nature had deny'd
Her choicest blessing to her fairest creature,
Her soft desires, that steal abroad unseen,
Like silver Cynthia sliding from her orb,
At dead of night, to young Endymion's arms.

Æth. How! think you so?—But so 'tis true it may be;
The best of all the sex is but a woman;
And why should Nature break her rule for one,
To make one true, when all the rest are false?
To find those wishes then, those fond desires,
To trace the fulsome haunts of wanton appetite,
She must be try'd.

Eur. That to thy care, my *Æthon*,
Thy wit, and watchful friendship, I commend.

Æth. Yes, Sir, be certain on't, she shall be try'd;
Thro' all the winding mazes of her thoughts;
Thro' all her joys, her sorrows, and her fears,
Thro' all her truth and falshood, I'll pursue her;
She shall be subtler than deceit itself,
And prosperously wicked, if she 'scape me.

Eur. Thou art my genius, and my happier hours
Depend upon thy providence and rule:
This day, at her return from Juno's altar,
I have obtain'd an hour of private conference.

Æth. What! private, said you? 'Twas a mark of fa-
Distinguishingly kind. [your,

Eur. Somewhat I urg'd
That much concern'd her honour and her safety;
Nay, ev'n the life of her belov'd Telemachus,
Which to her ear alone I would disclose.
Thou shalt be present—How I mean to prove her,
Which way to shake the temper of her soul,
And where thy aid may stand me most in stead,
I will instruct thee as we pass along.

Æth. I wait you, Sir.

Eur. Nor doubt of the success.
This stubborn beauty shall be taught compliance:
Fair daughter of the ocean, smiling Venus,
Thou joy of gods and men, assist my purpose!
Thy Cyprus and Cythera leave a while,
Thy Paphian groves and sweet Idalian hill,
To fix thy empire in this rugged isle;
Bring all thy fires from ev'ry lover there,
To warm this coy, this cruel frozen fair;
Let her no more from nature's laws be free,
But learn obedience to thy great decree,
Since gods themselves submit to Fate, and thee.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Enter Antinous, Cleon, and Arcas.

ANTINOUS.

'TIS thus, my fellow-citizens and friends,
'Tis thus unhappy Ithaca must groan
Beneath the bondage of a foreign lord ;
A needy upstart race of hungry strangers
Shall swarm upon the land, eat its increase,
Devour the labours of the toiling hind,
And gather all the wealth and honours of our isle.

Cle. The silken minions of the Samian court,
To lord it o'er the province shall be sent,
To rule the state, to be the chiefs in war,
And lead our hardy Ithacans to battle.
Freedom and right shall cease, our corn, wine, oil,
The fatness of the year, shall all be theirs ;
Our modest matrons, and our virgin daughters,
Ev'n all we hold most dear, shall be the spoil,
The prey of our imperious haughty masters.

Arc. Would I could say I did not fear these evils !

Ant. Oh, honest Arcas ! 'tis too plain a danger.
The Queen, requir'd by public voice to wed,
To end at once the hopes and riotous concourse
Of princely guests, contending for her love.
O'er-passing all the noblest of our isle,
Inclines to fix her choice on proud Eurymachus.

Cle. Why rides the Samian fleet within our harbour,
But to support their tyrant's title here ?
With causes feign'd they linger long, pretending
Rude winter seas, with omens that forbid
The frighted mariner to leave the shore ;
While Neptune smooths his waters for their passage,
And gently whistling winds invite their sails,
As if they wish'd to waft them back to Samos :

Arc. Ulysses is no more ; the partial gods,
Who favour'd Priam and his hapless race,
Have pour'd their wrath on his devoted head,
And now, in some far distant realm, expos'd,
To glut the vulture's and the lion's maw,
Or in the oozy bottom of the deep,

Full many a fathom down, the hero lies,
 And never shall return—What then remains,
 But that our country fly to thee for succour, [To Ant.
 To thee, the noblest of the lords of Ithaca?
 And since, so fate ordains, our Queen must wed,
 Be thou her second choice, be thou our ruler,
 And save our nation from a foreign yoke.

Ant. You are my friends, and over-rate my worth;
 But witness for me, for you still have known me,
 Whene'er my country's service calls me on,
 No enterprize so doubtful, or so dangerous,
 But I will boldly prove it, to preserve thee,
 Oh, Ithaca! from bondage.

Cle. Wherefore urge you not
 Your suit among the rest?

Ant. The cruel Queen
 Rejects my humble vows with angry scorn?
 And when I once presum'd to speak my passion,
 She call'd it insolence—Since then I've strove
 To hide th' unlucky folly from all eyes
 But yours, my friends, who view my naked soul.

Arc. Avow your flame in public, tell the world,
 Antinous is worthy of a queen:
 So many valiant hands shall own your cause,
 So shall the voice in Ithaca be for you,
 The Queen shall own your love has made her great,
 And giv'n her back an empire she had lost.

Ant. Think not I dream the hours of life away,
 Supine, and negligent of love and glory;
 No, Arcas, no; my active mind is busy,
 And still has labour'd with a vast design;
 Ere long the beauteous birth will be disclos'd,
 Then shall your pow'rs come forth, your swords and coun-
 And manifest the love you bear Antinous. [sels,
 'Till then be still—To favour my design,
 With low submissions, with obsequious duty,
 And vows of friendship fit to flatter boys with,
 I've wound myself into the Prince's heart.

Cle. 'Tis said the love-sick youth doats ev'n to death
 Upon the Samian Princess, fair Semanthe.

Ant. Let it go on; 'tis a convenient dotage,
 And suits my purpose well—The youth by nature

Is active, fiery, bold, and great of soul ;
 Love is the bane of all these noble qualities,
 The sickly fit that palls ambition's appetite ;
 And therefore have I nurs'd the fond disease,
 Inspiring lazy wishes, sighs, and languishings,
 Unactive dreaming sloth, and womanish softness,
 To freeze his veins, and quench his manly fires.
 The froward God of Love, to boast his pow'r,
 Has bred of late some little jars between them ;
 But 'twas my care to reconcile their follies,
 And, if my augury deceives me not,
 This day a priest in private makes them one,
 Unknown or to the Queen or to Eurymachus.
 But see ! they come——Retire.

Enter Telemachus and Semanthe.

Do, sigh, and smile,
 And print thy lips upon the soft white hand ;
 Sceptres and crowns are trifles none regard,
 That can be bless'd with such a joy as this is.

[Exit Ant. Cle. and Arc.]

Tel. Yes, my Semanthe, still I will complain,
 Still I will murmur at thee, cruel maid,
 For all that pain thou gav'st my heart but now.
 What god, averse to innocence and love,
 Could shake thy gentle soul with such a storm ?
 Just at that happy moment, when the priest [thee,
 Had join'd our hands, thou start'dst as death had struck
 And, sighing, cry'd, Ah, no !—it is impossible !

Sem. And yet, Oh, my lov'd lord ! yet I am yours ;
 This hand has giv'n me to you, and this heart,
 This heart, that achs with tenderness, confirm'd it.

Tel. And yet thou art not mine ; ' else why this sorrow ?
 Why art thou wet with weeping, as the earth,
 When vernal Jove descends in gentle show'rs,
 To cause increase, and bless the infant year,
 When ev'ry spiry grass, and painted flow'r,
 Is hung with pearly drops of heav'nly rain ?

Sem. Ye woods and plains, and all ye virgin dryads,
 Happy companions of those woods and plains,
 Why was I forc'd to leave your chearful fellowship,
 To come and lose my peace of mind at Ithaca ?
 And, Oh, Semanthe ! wherefore didst thou listen

To that dear voice? Why didst thou break thy vow,
Made to the huntress, Cynthia, and her train?

Ah, say, fond maid! say, wherefore didst thou love?

Tel. Alas, my gentle love! how have I wrong'd thee?
By what unwilling crime have I offended,
That thus with streaming eyes thou shouldst complain,
Thus dash my joys, and quench those holy fires,
By yellow Hymen's torch so lately lighted,
Thus stain this blessed day, our bridal day,
With the detested omen of thy sorrows.

Sem. Of what should I accuse thee? Thou art noble,
Thy heart is soft, is pitiful, and tender;
And thou wilt never wrong the poor Semanthe.
And yet ———

Tel. What mean'st thou?

Sem. What have we been doing?

Tel. A deed of happiness.

Sem. Are we not marry'd?

Tel. We are; and like the careful, thrifty hind,
Who, provident of winter, fills his stores
With all the various plenty of the autumn,
We've hoarded up a mighty mass of joy,
To last for all our years that are to come,
And sweeten ev'ry bitter hour of life.

Sem. Fain would I sooth my soul with these sweet hopes,
Forget the anguish of my waking cares,
And all those boding dreams that haunt my slumbers.
Last night, when after many a heavy sigh,
And many a painful thought, the god of sleep,
Insensible and soft, had stole upon me;
Methought I found me by a murm'ring brook,
Reclin'd at ease upon the flow'ry margin,
And thou, thou first and last of all my thoughts,
Thou dear, eternal object of my wishes,
Close by my side wert laid ———

Tel. Delightful vision!

And, Oh, Oh, pity that it was not real!

Sem. Awhile on many a pleasing theme we talk'd,
And mingled sweet discourse; when on the sudden,
The cry of hounds, the jolly huntsman's horn,
With all the chearful music of the chase,
Surpris'd my ear, and straight a troop of nymphs,
Once the dear partners of my virgin heart,

Flew lightly by us, eager of the sport ;
 Last came the goddess, great Latona's daughter,
 With more than mortal grace she stood confest,
 I saw the golden quiver at her back,
 And heard the sounding of her silver bow ;
 Abash'd I rose, and lowly made obeysance ;
 But she, not sweet, nor affable, nor smiling,
 As once she wont, with stern regard beheld me ;
 And wherefore dost thou loiter here, she said,
 Of me, thy fellows, and our sports unmindful ?
 Return, thou fugitive ; nor vainly hope
 To dress thy bridal bed, and waste thy youth
 In wanton pleasures, and inglorious love !
 A virgin at my altar wert thou vow'd,
 'Tis fix'd by fate, and thou art mine for ever.
 With that she snatch'd a chaplet from my hand,
 Which for thy head in fondness I had wove,
 And bore me swiftly with her.—In my flight,
 Backwards, methought, I turn'd my eyes to thee,
 But found thee not, for thou wert vanish'd from me,
 And in thy place my father lay extended
 Upon the earth, a bloody lifeless corse ;
 Struck to the very heart, I shriek'd aloud,
 And waking, found my tears upon my pillow.

Tel. Vex not thy peaceful soul, my fair Semanthe,
 Nor dread the anger of the awful gods,
 Safe in thy native unoffending innocence.
 Still when the golden sun withdraws his beams,
 And drowsy night invades the weary world,
 Forth flies the god of dreams, fantastic Morpheus,
 Ten thousand mimic phantoms fleet around him,
 Subtle as air, and various in their natures,
 Each has ten thousand, thousand diff'rent forms,
 In which they dance confus'd before the sleeper,
 While the vain god laughs to behold what pain
 Imaginary evils give mankind.

Sem. Not happy omens that approve our wishes,
 When bright with flames the chearful altar shines,
 And the good gods are gracious to our offerings,
 Not oracles themselves, that speak us happy,
 Could charm my fears, and lull my froward sorrows,
 Like the dear voice of him whom my soul loves.
 Ev'n while thou spok'st my breast begun to glow,

I felt sweet hopes, and joy, and peace returning,
And all the fires of life were kindled up anew.

Tel. Hence then, thou meager care, ill-boding me-
Anxious disquiet, and heart-breaking grief, [lancholy,
Fly to your native seats, where deep below
Old night and horror with the furies dwell,
Love and the joyful genial bed discla'm you;
'To-night a thousand little 'aughing Cupids
Shall be our guard, and wakeful watch around us;
No sound, no thought shall enter to disturb us,
But sacred silence reign; unless, sometimes,
We sigh and murmur with excess of happiness.

Sem. Alas, my Lord!

Tel. Again that mournful sound!

Sem. What other pain is this? What other fear,
So diff'rent quite from what I felt before?
Alternate heat and cold shoot through my veins;
Now a chill dew hangs faintly on my brow,
And now with gentle warmth I glow all o'er;
Short are my sighs, and nimbly beats my heart,
I gaze on thee with joy, and yet I tremble;
'Tis pain and pleasure blended, both at once,
'Tis life and death, or something more than either.

Tel. Thus untry'd soldiers, when the trumpet sounds,
Expect the combat with uncertain passions;
Thus Nature speaks in unexperienc'd maids,
And thus they blush, and thus like thee they tremble.
At even, when the queen retires to rest,
I'll meet thee here, and take thee to my arms,
Thy best, thy surest refuge.—
But see! the stranger Æthon comes; retire;
I would not have his watchful eye observe us.

Enter Æthon.

I charge thee loiter not, but haste to bless me,
Haste, at th' appointed hour—
'Think with what eager hopes, what rage I burn,
For ev'ry tedious minute how I mourn;
Think how I call thee cruel for thy stay,
And break my heart with grief, for thy unkind delay.

[*Exit Telemachus and Sem.*

Æth. Ha! what, so close! How cautious to avoid me!
As who should say, old man, you are too wise,

What

What has my youth to do with your instructions,
 While folly is so pleasant to my taste,
 And damn'd destruction wears a face so fair?
 This Samian king is happy in his arts;
 His daughter, vow'd a virgin to Diana,
 Is brought to play the wanton here at Ithaca:
 No matter for religion; let the gods
 Look to their rites themselves: the youth grows fond,
 Just to their wish! and swears himself their vassal.
 His mother follows next——But soft——They come;
 Now to put on the pander——That's my office.

Enter the Queen and Eurymachus.

Queen. Have I not answer'd oft, it is in vain,
 In vain to urge me with this hateful subject?
 As thou art noble, pity me, Eurymachus,
 Add not new weight of sorrows to my days,
 That drag too slow, too heavily along;
 Compel me not to curse my life, my being,
 To curse each morn, each chearful morn, that dawns
 With healing comfort on its balmy wings,
 To ev'ry wretched creature but myself;
 To me it brings more pain, and iterated woes.

Eur. Oh, god of eloquence, bright Maia's son!
 Teach me what more than mortal grace of speech,
 What sounds can move this fierce relentless fair,
 This cruel Queen, that pityless beholds
 My heart that bleeds for her, my humble knee,
 In abject low submission bent to earth,
 To deprecate her scorn, and beg in vain,
 One gracious word, one favourable look.

Queen. Count back the tedious years, since first my hero
 Forsook these faithful arms to war with Troy;
 And yet in all that long, long tract of time,
 Witness, ye chaster powers, if e'er my thoughts
 Have harbour'd any other guest but him;
 Remember, king of Samos, what I have been,
 Then think if I can change——Æthon, come near.

[Æthon comes forward.]

Good honest man! how rare is truth like thine!
 Thou great example of a loyal friend!

Æth. Oh, lady, spare that praise; if few like me
 Are friends, yet none have ever lov'd like you;

Why what a mighty space is twenty years !
 'Tis irksome to remembrance, to look back
 Upon your youth, that happier part of life,
 Like some fair field; of rich and fertile soil,
 That might have blest the owner with abundance,
 But left unheeded, like a barren moor,
 Lies fenceless, wild, uncultivate, and waste.

Queen. Alas!

Eur. Were youth and beauty giv'n in vain ?
 Why were the gods so lavish of their gifts
 To one whose fullen pride neglects to use them,
 As if she scorn'd the care heav'n took to make her happy ?

Æth. More than enough of sorrow have you known ;
 Give ease at length to your afflicted soul,
 Be comforted, and now while time is yours,
 Taste the good things of life, yet e'er they perish,
 Yet e'er the happy season pass away.

Queen. What sov'reign balm, what heav'nly healing
 Can cure a heart so torn with grief as mine, [art,
 Can stay this never-ceasing stream of tears,
 And once more make my senses know delight ?

Eur. What god can work that miracle but Love ?
 Love, who dispenses joy to heav'n itself,
 And cheats his fellow-gods more than their nectar,
 'Till wrapt with vast, unutterable pleasures,
 Such as immortal natures only know,
 Each owns his pow'r, and blesses the sweet boy.

Queen. Now, Æthon, by thy friendship to my Lord,
 Answer, I charge thee, to this cruel king ;
 Demand if it be noble to prophane
 My virtue thus, with loose dishonest courtship.

Æth. Are love and virtue then such mortal foes,
 That they must never meet ?

Queen. Never with me,
 Unless my Lord return.

Æth. Vain expectation !

Queen. Ha ! Surely I mistook !—What said'st thou,
 Æthon ?

Æth. That you have waited long for that return,
 Wasted too much of life, and cast away
 Those precious hours, that might have been employ'd
 To better use than weeping.

Queen.

Queen. This from thee!

Oh, faithless! Truth is vanish'd then indeed.

Oh, Æthon!—art thou too become my enemy!

Æth. If, to reward your faith to lost Ulysses,
I pray the gods to heap their blessings on you,
To make you mistress of a mighty nation,
An empire greater, nobler than your own,
And crown you with this valiant monarch's love,
If this be enmity, you may accuse me.

Queen. Dost thou solicit for him? Dost thou dare
Invade my peace, my virtue?

Æth. Not for him,
But for the common happiness of both.

Queen. Traitor! no more—at length thy wicked arts,
Thy false dissembled friendship for my Lord,
Thy pious journey hither for his sake,
Thy care of me, my son, and of the state,
Thy praise, thy counsels, and thy shew of virtue,
So holy, so adorn'd with rev'rend age,
All are reveal'd, and thou confest a villain;
Hire, and the fordid love of gain have caught thee;
Gold has prevail'd upon thee to betray me,
And bargain for my honour with this prince.

[*Pointing to Eurymachus.*

Æth. It grieves me I offend you—sure I am,
I meant it as a friend.

Queen. Hence from my sight!

Eur. Æthon, no more—Since love and willing friend-
Employ their pious offices in vain, [ship
Learn we, henceforth, from this imperious beauty,
Learn we, from her example, to be cruel;
And though our softer passions rest unsatisfy'd,
Yet the more fierce, the manly, and the rough,
Shall be indulg'd and riot to excess.
Up then, Revenge, and arm thee, thou fell fury,
Up then, and shake thy hundred iron whips;
To-day I vow to sacrifice to thee,
And flake thy horrid thirst with draughts of royal gore.

Queen. What says the tyrant? [*Aside.*] Oh, Euryma-
What fatal purpose has thy heart conceiv'd? [chius!
What means that rage that lightens in thy eyes,
That flashes fierce, and menaces destruction?

Eur. The lambent fire of love prevails no more,

And now another mightier flame succeeds ;
 Vaunt not too soon, nor triumph in thy scorn ;
 For know, proud Queen, in spite of thy disdain,
 There is a way ev'n yet to reach thy heart.
 Thou hast a son, the darling of thy eyes—

Queen. Oh, fatal thought !

Fear, like the hand of death, hath seiz'd my heart,
 Cold, chilling cold—my son ! Oh, my Telemachus !

Æth. That stroke was home---now, Virtue, hold thy
 own. [*Aside.*

Eur. Know then, that son is in my pow'r; and holds
 His frail uncertain being at my pleasure ;
 And when I frown, death and destruction, greedy,
 Watchful, intent like tygers on their prey,
 Start sudden forth, and seize the helpless boy.
 'Three hundred chosen warriors from my fleet,
 Who undiscern'd, in parties, and by stealth,
 Late came a-shore, now wait for my commands ;
 'Think on them as the ministers of fate,
 For when I bid them execute, 'tis done.

Queen. If, as my soul presages from those terrors
 Which gather on thy stern, tempestuous brow,
 Thou art severely bent on death and vengeance,
 Yet hear me, hear a wretch's only pray'r,
 Oh, spare the innocent, spare my Telemachus ;
 Let not the ruffian's sword nor murd'rous violence
 Cut off the noble promise of his youth,
 Oh, spare him, and let all thy rage fall here ;
 Remember, 'twas this haughty, stubborn queen
 Refus'd thy love, and let her feel thy hate.

Eur. A secret joy glides through my fullen heart,
 To see so fair a suitor kneel before me.
 But what have I to do with thoughts like these ?
 Æthon, go bear this ring to bold Ceraunus,
 The valiant leader of our Samian band ;
 My last of orders, which this morn I gave him,
 Bid him perform ; haste thou, and see it done.

Queen. Stay I conjure thee, Æthon—Cruel king !
 Speak, answer me, unfold this dreadful secret ;
 Where points this sudden, dark, mysterious mischief ?
 Say, at the head of what devoted wretch

This winged thunder aims—Say, while my fears
Have left me yet a little life to hear thee.

Eur. Already dost thou dread the gath'ring storm,
That grumbles in the air, preludeing ruin?
But mark the stroke, keep all thy tears for that,
Too soon it shall be told thee—*Æthon*, hence.

Queen. [*Holding Æthon.*] Not for thy life---No, not
till thou hast heard me. [*To Eurymachus.*

Too well, alas! I understand my fate.
How have I been, among the happy mothers,
Call'd the most happy, now the most miserable:
Then barren, comfortless fate down and wept,
When they compar'd their marriage-beds with mine;
The fruitful, when they boasted of their numbers,
With envy and unwilling praise, confess
That I had all their blessings in my one.
Our virgins, when they met him, sigh'd and blush'd,
Matrons and wives beheld him as a wonder,
And gazing clouds pursu'd and blest him as he pass'd.
But then his youth! his tenderness! his piety!
Oh, my Telemachus! my son! my son!

Eur. And what are all these tears and helpless wailings,
What poor amends to injur'd love and me?
How have I mourn'd thy scorn, unkind and cruel?
How have I melted in unmanly weeping?
How have I taught the stubborn rocks of Ithaca,
And all the sounding shore to echo my complainings?
And hast thou e'er relented? Now mourn thou,
And murmur not, nor think thy lot too hard,
Since equal justice pays thee but thy own.

Queen. Oh, didst thou know what agonies I feel,
Hard as thou art, thou wouldst have pity on me:
Death is too poor a name, for that means rest,
But 'tis despair—'tis mad—tormenting rage,
'Tis terrible—'tis bitter pain—it is
A mother's mourning for her only son.

Æth. Now, now her labouring heart is rent with an-
Oh, nature, how affecting are thy sorrows! [*gush!*
How moving, melting in a mother's eyes!
So silver Thetis, on the Phrygian shore,
Wept for her son, fore-knowing of his fate,
The sea-nymphs fate around, and join'd their tears,

While

While from his lowest deep old father ocean
Was heard to groan, in pity of their pain. [*Aside.*]

Eur. Fair mourner, rise—Thus far thou hast prevail'd.
[*Offering to raise her.*]

If, to atone for all I have endur'd,
For all thy cold neglect, thy arts, delays,
For all my years of anxious expectation,
'This night thou give thy beauties to my arms;
'This night! for love, impatient of my wrongs,
Allows not ev'n a moment's space beyond it;
'The prince, thy lov'd Telemachus, shall live,
And danger and distress shall never know thee more.

Queen. Oh, shame! Oh, modesty! connubial truth
And spotless purity! Ye heav'nly train!
Have I preserv'd you in my secret soul,
'To give you up at last, then plunge in guilt,
Abandon'd to dishonour and pollution!
Oh, never! never! let me first be rack'd,
Torn, scatter'd by the winds, plung'd in the deep,
Or bound amidst the flames—Oh, friendly earth
Open thy bosom—And thou, Proserpine,
Infernal Juno, mighty queen of shades,
Receive me to thy dark, thy dreadful empire,
And hide me, save me from this tyrant's tury.

Æth. Oh, racking, racking pain of secret thought!

Eur. Hence! hence, thou trifler, love! fond, vain de-
I cast, I tear thee out—Æthon, begone! [*Aside.*]

Queen. Then drag me too!—Yet hear me once, once
For I will speak to thee of love!—of rage! [*more,*]
Of death! of madness! and eternal chaos!

Eur. Away, thou loiterer! [*To Æthon.*]

Æth. Then I must go?

Queen. Eurymachus! [*Holding out her hand to him.*]

Eur. Speak—

Queen. Mercy!

Eur. Love!

Queen. Telemachus.

Eur. My queen! My goddess! Art thou kind at last!
Oh, softly, softly breathe the charming sound,
And let it gently steal upon my soul,
Gently as falls the balmy dew from heav'n,

Or let thy kind consenting eyes speak for thee,
And bring me the sweet tidings from thy heart;
She yields! Immortal gods, she yields!

Queen. Where is he?

Where is my son? Oh, tell me, is he safe,
Swear to me some most sacred solemn oath,
Swear my Telemachus is free from danger.

Eur. Hear me, great Jove, father of gods and men,
And thou, blue Neptune, and thou, Stygian Pluto,
Hear, all ye greater and ye lesser powers,
That rule in heav'n, in earth, in seas, and hell,
While to my queen, on this fair hand I swear,
That royal youth, that best-lov'd son is safe,
Nor dies, unless his mother urge his fate.
At night, a priest, by faithful Æthon's care,
In private shall attend at thy apartment,
There while rich gums we burn, and spicy odours,
The gods of marriage and of love invoking,
I will renew my vows, and at thy feet,
Devote ev'n all my pow'rs to thy command.

Queen. 'Till then be kind, and leave me to myself;
Leave me to vent the fulness of my breast,
Pour out the sorrows of my soul alone,
And sigh myself, if possible, to peace.
Oh, thou dear youth, for whom I feel again
My throes, and twice endure a mother's pain;
Well had I dy'd to save thee, Oh, my son!
Well, to preserve thy life, had giv'n my own;
But when the thoughts of former days return,
When my lost virtue; fame, and peace I mourn,
The joys which still thou gav'st me I forget,
And own I bought thee at a price too great. [Exit.

Eur. At length we have prevail'd: fear, doubt and
Those peevish female virtues, fly before us, [Shame,
And the disputed field at last is ours.

Æth. Yes, you have conquer'd, have approv'd yourself
A master in the knowledge of the sex.
What then remains, but to prepare for triumph,
To raffle all the spoils of captive beauty,
And reap the sweet reward of your past labours?
What of the prince?

Eur. He lives, but must be mine,

And

And my Semanthe's love the band to hold him ;
 But to to-morrow's dawn leave we that care :
 The present day, for deep, for vast designs,
 And hardy execution is decreed.

This night, according to their wonted riot,
 The rival princes mean to hold a feast.

Æth. I mark'd but now the mighty preparation,
 When to the hall the sweating slaves pass in,
 Bending beneath the massie goblets' weight,
 Whose each capacious womb, fraught with rich juice
 Drawn from the Chian and the Lesbian grape,
 Portended witless mirth, vain laughter, boasting,
 Contentious brawling, madness, mischief, and foul mur-
 While to appease the glutton's greedy maw [der ;
 Whole herds are slain, more than suffice for hecatombs,
 Ev'n more than zeal, with pious prodigality,
 Bestows upon the gods to feed their priests with.

Eur. Then mark me well, or e'er the rowling night
 Hath finish'd half her course, the fummy vapours
 And mounting spirits of the deep-drunk bowl,
 Shall seize the brains of these carousing lovers ;
 Then shalt thou, *Æthon*, with my valiant Samians,
 Arm'd and appointed all at thy command,
 Surround the hall, and on our common foes
 At once revenge my queen, thyself, and me.

Æth. Ha ! At a blow !—'tis just—'tis greatly thought !
 By Jove th'avenger, 'twill be noble slaughter ;
 Nor doubt the event. I answer for them all,
 Ev'n to a man.

Eur. Thine then be all the care,
 While I with softer pleasures crown my hours,
 And revel in delight.

Æth. How ! At that hour ! [Starting.
 Ha !—— In enjoyment ! Can that be ?

Eur. It must.
 Fierce for the joy, in secret, and alone
 I'll steal upon my love.

Æth. Stay ! that were well !
 Alone you must——

Eur. None but the conscious priest——
 That too must be thy care, to chuse one faithful,
 Obe for the purpose fit.

Æth. Most worthy office!
 One to your wish, try'd in these pious secrets,
 My friend of ancient date, is now in Ithaca;
 Him sworn to secrecy, and well prepar'd,
 I will instruct to wait you with the Queen. [*Afide.*]

Eur. Then be propitious, Love!

Æth. And thou, Revenge,
 Shoot all thy fires, and wake my slumb'ring rage,
 Let my past wrongs, let indignation raise
 My age to emulate my youthful praise;
 Let the stern purpose of my heart succeed,
 Let riot, lust, and proud injustice bleed:
 Grant me but this, ye gods, who favour right,
 I ask no other bliss nor fond delight,
 Nor envy thee, Oh, king, thy bridal night. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Enter Æthon, Mentor, and Eumæus.

ÆTHON.

IF virtue be abandon'd, lost and gone,
 No matter for the means that wrought the ruin;
 Whether the pomp of pleasure danc'd before her,
 Alluring to the sense, or dreadful danger
 Came arm'd with all its terrors to the onset,
 She should have held the battle to the last,
 Undaunted, yieldless, firm, and dy'd or conquer'd.

Men. Think on what hard, on what unequal terms
 Virtue, betray'd within by woman's weakness,
 Beset without with mighty fears and flatteries,
 Maintains the doubtful conflict---Sure if any
 Have kept the holy marriage-bed inviolate,
 If all our Grecian wives are not like Helen,
 That praise the Queen, my royal mistress, merits.

Eum. And, Oh, impute not one unheeded word,
 Forc'd from her in the bitterest pangs of sorrow,
 When fierce conflicting passions strove within,
 Like all the winds at once let loose upon the main,
 When wild distraction rul'd---Oh, urge not that,

A blemish

A blemish on her fair; her matchless fame.

Æth. Oh, Mentor, and Eumæus, faithful pair!
To whom my life, my honour, all I trust,
These eyes beheld her yielding---Cursed object!
Beheld her in the Samian king's embrace;
The sight of hell, of baleful Acheron
That rolls his livid waves around the damn'd,
Roaring and yelling on the farther shore,
Was not so terrible, so irksome to me,
As when I saw his arms in-fold Penelope.
I heard the fatal compact for to-night,
'The joys which he propos'd, nor she deny'd-----
But see she comes-----

Men. How much unlike a bride!

Enter the Queen.

Behold her tears, see comfortless affliction,
Anguish, and helpless, desolate misfortune
Writ in her face.

Æth. Retire; I would observe her.

[*Men. and Eum. retire to the back part of the stage.*

Queen. And dost thou only weep? Shall that put off
Th' approaching hour of shame, or save thy son?
'Thou weep'st, and yet the setting sun descends
Swift to the western waves; and guilty night,
Hasty to spread her horrors o'er the world,
Rides on the dusky air-----And now it comes,
'The fatal moment comes, ev'n that dread time
When witches meet to gather herbs on graves,
When discontented ghosts forsake their tombs,
And ghastly roam about, and doleful groan;
And hark! the screech-owl screams, and beats the window,
With deadly wings---And hark!---More dreadful yet,
Like Thracian Tereus to unhappy Philomel,
'The furious bridegroom comes,---the tyrant ravisher!
And see! the shade of my much-injur'd Lord
Starts up to blast me!---Hence!---Begone, you horrors,
For I will hide me in the arms of death,
And think on you no more---That traitor here!

[*Seeing Æthon.*

Æth. Hail, beauteous Queen! The god of love salutes
And thus by great Eurymachus he speaks: [thee,
Be sorrow and misfortune on thy foes;

But

But let thy days be crown'd with smiling peace,
Content and everlasting joy dwell with thee.

Queen. Com'st thou to greet me with the sounds of joy,
Thou messenger of fate?—So the hoarse raven
Croaks o'er the mansion of the dying man,
And often warns him with this dismal note,
To think upon his tomb.

Æth. Or I mistook,
Or I was bid to treat of gentler matters,
Kindly to ask at what auspicious hour,
Your royal bridegroom and the priest should wait you.

Queen. Too well my boding heart foretold thy tidings.
Now what reply?—There is no room for choice,
'Tis one degree of infamy to doubt:
What must be must be—Let me then resolve,
'Tis only thus—no more---and I am free. [*Afide.*]
Say to the Samian king, thy master, thus;
When Menelaus and the fate of Greece
Summon'd my Lord to Troy, he left behind him
None worthy of his place in love or empire.

Æth. How, lady!—Whither points her meaning now? [*Afide.*]

Queen. Say too, I've held his merit in the balance,
But find the price of honour so much greater,
That 'twere an idiot's bargain to exchange them;
Yet tell him too, I have my sex's weakness,
I have a mother's fondness in my eyes,
And all her tender passions in my heart.

Æth. Ay, there! 'tis there she's lost! [*Afide.*]

Queen. Nor can I bear
To see what more, far more than life I joy in,
My only pledge of love, my Lord's dear image,
My son by bloody hands mangled and murder'd;
(Oh, terrible to nature!) Therefore one,
One remedy alone is left to save me,
To shield me from a sight of so much horror,
And tell Eurymachus, I find it—here.

[*She offers to stab herself; Æthon catches hold of her arm, and prevents her.*]

Æth. Forbid it, gods! Perish the tyrant rather,
Let Samos be no more.

Queen. Off! Off, thou traitor!

Give way to my just rage!—Oh, tardy hand!
 To what hast thou betray'd me! Let me go,
 Oh, let me, let me die, or I will curse thee,
 'Till hell shall tremble at my imprecations,
 'Till Heav'n shall blast thee—lost!—undone for ever!

Æth. Oh, tritler that I am! Mentor, Eumæus,
 [*They come forward.*]

Come to my aid!—Be calm but for a moment,
 And wait to see what wonders it will shew thee.
 Guard her upon your lives, remember that,
 Guard her from ev'ry instrument of death,
 Sooth and assuage her grief, till my return;
 Unfold the mighty secret of her fate,
 And once more reconcile her soul to peace.

[*Exit Æthon.*]

Queen. And are you too my foes? Have you conspir'd
 And join'd with that false Æthon to betray me?
 Here sit thee down then, humbly in the dust,
 Here sit, a poor, forlorn, abandon'd woman;
 Cast not thy eyes up to yon' azure firmament,
 Nor hope relief from thence, the gods are pitiless,
 Or busy in their heav'n, and thou not worth their care;
 And, Oh! Oh! cast them not on earth, to seek
 For succour from the faithless race of man;
 But as thou art forsaken and alone,
 Hope not for help, where there is none to help thee,
 But think—'tis desolation all about thee.

Men. Far be that thought, to think you are forsaken;
 Gods and good men shall make you still their care.
 And, Oh! far be it from your faithful servants,
 For all those honours mad ambition toils for,
 For all the wealth that bribes the world to wickedness,
 For hopes or fears, for pleasures or for pains,
 To leave our royal mistress in distress.

Eum. At length time's fulness comes, and that great
 For which so many tedious years roll'd round; [period,
 At length the white, the smiling minute comes,
 'To wipe the tears from those fair eyes for ever;
 That good we daily pray'd for, but pray'd hopeless,
 That good, which ev'n the prescience of the gods
 (So doubtfully was it set down in fate,)
 Uncertainly foresaw, and darkly promis'd,

That good, one day, the happiest of our lives,
Freely and fortunately brings to pass.

Men. And hark! vindictive Jove prepares his thunder.
[*Thunders.*]

Let the wrong-doer and the tyrant tremble;
The gods are present with us—And behold!
The solid gloom of night is rent afunder,
While floods of dazzling, pure ætherial light,
Break in upon the shades—She comes, she comes!
Pallas, the saviours of my master's arms.
And see where terrible in arms, majestic,
Celestial, and ineffably effulgent,
She shakes her dreadful Ægis from the clouds!
Bend, bend to earth, and own the present deity.

[*It thunders again.*]

The SCENE opens above, and discovers Pallas in the Clouds.
They kneel.

Eum. Daughter of mighty Jove, Tritonian Pallas,
Be favourable! Oh!—Oh! be propitious,
And save the sinking house of thy Ulysses.

Men. Goddess of arts and arms, thou blue-ey'd maid,
Be favourable! Oh!—Oh! be propitious,
And glad thy suppliants with some chearful omen.

Queen. Virgin, begot and born of Jove alone,
Chaste, wise, victorious, if by thy assistance
The Greeks were well aveng'd on perjurd Troy,
If by thy aid, my Lord from Thracian Rhesus
Obtain'd his snowy steeds, and brought successful
Thy fatal image to the tents of Greece;
Once more be favourable—be propitious,
Restore my Lord—Or, if that be deny'd,
Grant me to share his fate, and die with honour.

[*Thunder again—The Scene closes above—They rise.*]

Men. The goddess smiles—Most happy be the omen!
And to the left auspicious rolls the thunder.

Enter Æthon, or Ulysses, without his disguise, magnificently arm'd and habited.

Queen. What other god art thou?—Oh, sacred form!
I dream, I rave!—Why put'st thou on this semblance?

What shall I call thee?—Say, speak, answer me.

[She advances two or three steps looking amazedly.]

Son of Laertes! King! My Lord!—Ulysses!

Ulyss. Why dost thou gaze?—Am I so dreadful still?
Is there so much of Æthon still about me?

Or hast thou——is it possible——forgot me?

Does not thy heart acknowledge something here?

Queen. Nay, 'tis, 'tis most impossible to reason.
But what have I to do with thought or reason?

Thus mad, distracted, raging with my joy,
I'll rush upon thee, clasp thee to my bosom,
And if it be delusion, let me die,
Here let me sink to everlasting rest,
Just here, and never never think again.

Ulyss. No, live, thou great example of thy sex,
Live for the world, for me, and for thyself;
Unnumber'd blessings, honours, years of happiness,
Crowns from the gods, enrich'd with brightest stars,
All heav'n and earth united in applause,
Wait, with officious duty, to reward thee.
Live to enjoy ev'n all thou hast deserv'd,
That fulness of delight, of which these arms
And this transporting moment gives thee earnest.

Queen. I gaze upon thy face, and see thee here.
The sullen pow'rs below, who rule the dead,
Have listen'd to my weeping, and relented,
Have sent thee from Elysium back to me;
Or from the deep, from sea-green Neptune's seats,
Thou'rt risen like the day-star; or from heav'n
Some god has brought thee on the wings of winds;
Oh, ecstacy!—But all that I can know,
Is that I wake and live, and thou art here.

Ulyss. Troy, I forgive thee now! Ye toils and perils
Of my past life, well are you paid at once.
For this the faithless Syrens sung in vain;
For this I 'scap'd the den of monstrous Polypheme,
Fled from Calypso's bonds and Circe's charms;
For this, seven days, and seven long winter nights,
Shipwreck'd I floated on a driving mast;
Tost by the surge, pierc'd by the bitter blasts
Of bleak north-winds, and drench'd in the chill wave,
I strove with all the terrors of the deep.

Queen.

Queen. Yes, thou hast borne it all, I know thou hast,
 These wars, winds, magic, monsters, all for me.
 Blest be the gracious gods that gave thee to me!
 Say then! Oh, how shall I reward thy labours?
 But I will sit and listen to thy story,
 While thou recount'st it o'er; and when thou speak'st
 Of difficulties hard and near to death,
 I'll pity thee, and answer with my tears;
 But when thou com'st to say how the gods fav'd thee,
 And how thy virtue struggled through the danger,
 For joy, I'll fold thee thus with soft endearments,
 And crown thy conquest with ten thousand kisses.

Ulyss. It is a heavy and a rueful tale,
 But thou wilt kindly share with me in all things;
 It shall be told thee then, whate'er I suffer'd,
 Since, in a luckless hour, I first set out,
 Ev'n to that time, when scarce twice ten days past,
 As from Phæacia homeward bound to Ithaca,
 A storm o'ertook and wreck'd me on the coast;
 Alone and naked was I cast a-shore.
 And only to these faithful two made known,
 'Till Jove should point me out some opportunity,
 Once more to seize my right in thee and empire.

Men. 'Tis hard, injurious, an offence to virtue,
 To interrupt your joys, ye royal pair;
 But, Oh, forgive your faithful servant's caution,
 Think where you are, what eyes malicious chance
 May bring to pry into the happy secret,
 Untimely to disclose the fatal birth,
 And rashly bring it immature to light.

Ulyss. Mentor, thou warn'st us well — Retire, my love.

Queen. What must we part already?

Ulyss. For a moment,
 Like waves divided by the gliding bark,
 That meet again, and mingle as before.

Queen. Be sure it be not longer.

Ulyss. Sweet, it sha' not.
 I'll meet thee soon, and bring our mutual blessing,
 Our son, t'increase the joy.

Queen. I must obey you.
 Remember well how long thou hast been absent,
 And what a poor amends this short enjoyment makes me.

Oh, I shall die with strong desire to thee,
 Shall think this one impatient minute more,
 Than all thy long, long twenty years before. [Exit.

Enter at the other door Telemachus.

Tel. The Queen my mother, pass she not this way?

Men. She did, my Lord, ev'n now.

Tel. Saw you not too

The Samian princess, fair Semanthe, with her?
 Say; went they not together?

Ulyss. Might I speak,

I think it is not fit they were together;
 For wherefore should the queen of Ithaca
 Hold commerce with the daughter of Eurymachus?
 Pardon me, Sir, I fear you are offended,
 And think this boldness does not fit a stranger.

Tel. 'Tis true, thou art a stranger to my eyes;
 And yet, methought, thou spok'st with Æthon's voice,
 Save, that th'untoward purpose of thy words
 Seem'd harsh, ungentle, and not like my friend.

Ulyss. Whate'er I seem, believe me, princely youth,
 Thou hast not one, one dear selected mate,
 That ought to stand before me in thy heart;
 Though from your tender infancy till now,
 He dwelt within thy bosom, thou in his,
 Though every year has knit the band more close,
 Though variance never knew you, but complying
 Each ever yielded to the other's wishes,
 Though you have toil'd and rested, laugh'd and mourn'd,
 And ran through every part of life together,
 Though he was all thy joy, and thou all his,
 Yet sure he never lov'd thee more than I do.

Tel. Whoe'er thou art (for though thou still art Æthon,
 Thou art not he, but something more and greater)
 I feel the force of every word thou speak'st,
 My soul is aw'd with reverential fear,
 A fear not irksome, for 'tis mix'd with love,
 Ev'n such a fear as that we worship Heav'n with;
 Oh, pardon if I err, for if thou art not
 Æthon, my father's friend, thou art some god.

Ulyss. If barely to have been thy father's friend
 Could move thee to such tender, just regards,

Thus,

Thus, let me thus indulge thy filial virtue,

[*Embracing him.*]

Thus press thee in my arms, my pious son,
And while my swelling heart runs o'er with joy;
Thus tell thee that I am, I am thy father.

Tel. Oh, most amazing!—

Men. Yes, my royal charge,

At length behold thy god-like fire, Ulysses.
Blest be my age, with all its cares and sorrows,
Since it is lengthen'd out to see this day,
To give thee back, thou dear entrusted pledge,
Thus worthy as thou art, to thy great father's arms.

Tel. Oh, 'tis most certain so, my heart confesses him,
My blood and spirits, all the pow'rs of life,
Acknowledge here the spring from whence they came.
Then let me bow me, cast me at his feet,
There pay the humble homage of my duty,
There wet the earth before him with my tears,
The faithful witnesses of love and joy:

And when my tongue for rapture can no more,
Silent, with lifted eyes, I'll praise the gods,
Who gave me back my King, my Lord, my father.

Ulyss. Oh, rise, thou offspring of my nuptial joys,
Son of my youth, and glory of my strength,
Rob not thy father's arms of so much treasure,
But let us meet, as Jove and Nature meant us,
Thus, like a pair of very faithful friends;
And though I made harsh mention of thy love,
(Oh, droop not at the name) by blue-ey'd Pallas
I meant it not in angry, chiding mood;
But with a tender and a fond concern,
Reminded thee of what thou ow'st to honour.

Tel. When I forget it, may the worst afflictions,
Your scorn, your hate, and infamy o'ertake me;
Be that th'important bus'ness of my life,
Let me be task'd to hunt for it through danger,
Through all the roar of the tumultuous battle,
And dreadful din of arms; there, if I fail,
May cowards say I'm not Ulysses' son,
And the great author of our race disclaim me.

Ulyss. Oh, nobleness innate! Oh, worth divine!
Æthereal sparks! that speak the hero's lineage,

How

How are you pleasing to me?—So the eagle,
That bears the thunder of our grandsire Jove,
With joy beholds his hardy youthful offspring
Forsake the nest, to try his tender pinions,
In the wide untract air; till bolder grown,
Now, like a whirlwind, on the shepherd's fold
He darts precipitate, and gripes the prey;
Or fixing on some dragon's scaly hide,
Eager of combat, and his future feast,
Bears him aloft, reluctant, and in vain
Writhing his spiry tail.

Tel. I would be active,
Get me a name distinguish'd from the herd
Of common men, a name worthy my birth.

Ulyss. Nor shalt thou want th'occasion; now it courts
Stands ready, and demands thy courage now. [thee,
Were I indeed as other fathers are;
Did I but listen to soft Nature's voice,
I should not urge thee to this high exploit,
For though it brings thee fame, it brings thee danger.

Tel. Now by the god of war, ¹⁰⁸so much the better:
Let there be honour for your son to win,
And be the danger ne'er so rude and deadly,
No matter, 'twill enhance the prize the more,
And make it lovely in a brave man's eye;
So Hydra's and Chimera's form'd in gold,
Sit graceful underneath the nodding plume,
And terribly adorn the soldier's helm.

Ulyss. Know then, on this important night depends
The very crisis of our fate; to-night
That sleeping vengeance of the gods shall wake,
And speak confusion to our foes in thunder:
Justice entrusts her sword to this right hand,
And I will see it faithfully employ'd.

Tel. By virtue and by arms 'tis noble work!
I burn impatient for it—Oh, my father,
Give me my portion of the glorious labour.

Ulyss. Once more immediate danger threatens thy mother,
That to avert, must be thy pious care.
While Mentor, with Eumæus and ourself,
Back'd by a chosen band, (whom how prepar'd,
How gather'd to our aid, the pressing hour

Allows not now tell) invade yon drunkards,
 Immerst in riot, careless, and defying
 The gods as fables, start upon them sudden,
 And send their guilty souls to howl below,
 Upon the banks of Styx : while this is doing,
 Dar'st thou defend thy mother ?

Tel. Oh ! to death,
 Against united nations would I stand
 Her soldier, her defence, my single breast
 Oppos'd against the rage of their whole war ;
 She is so good, so worthy to be fought for,
 The sacred cause would make my sword successful,
 And gain my youth a mighty name in arms.

Ulyss. Then prove the peril, and enjoy the fame.
 Ere the mid-hour of rolling night approach,
 Remember well to plant thee at that door,
 Thou know'st it opens to the Queen's apartment.
 To bind thee yet more firm ; for, Oh, my son !

[Drawing his sword.]

With powerful opposition shalt thou strive,
 Swear on my sword, by thy own filial piety,
 By all our race, by Pallas and by Jove,
 If any of these cursed foreign tyrants,
 Those rivels of thy father's love and honour,
 Shall dare to pass through that forbidden entrance,
 To take his forfeit life for the intrusion.

Tel. I swear——And may my lot in future fame
[Telemachus kneels and kisses the sword.]
 Be good or evil but as I perform it.

Ulyss. Enough——I do believe thee.

Men. Hark ! my Lord !

[A confused noise is heard within.]

How loud the tempest roars ! The bellowing voice
 Of wild, enthusiastic, raging mirth,
 With peals of clamour shakes the vaulted roof.

Tel. Such surely is the sound of mighty armies
 In battle join'd, of cities sack'd at midnight,
 Of many waters, and united thunders ;
 My gen'rous soul takes fire, and half repines,
 To think she must not share the glorious danger,
 Where numbers wait you, worthy of your swords.

Ulyss. No more, thou hast thy charge, look well to that ;
 For

For these, these riotous sons of noise and uproar,
 I know their force, and know I am Ulysses.
 So Jove look'd down upon the war of atoms,
 And rude tumultuous chaos, when as yet
 Fair nature, form, and order had not being,
 But discord and confusion troubled all ;
 Calm and serene upon his throne he sat,
 Fix'd there by the eternal law of fate,
 Safe in himself, because he knew his pow'r ;
 And knowing what he was, he knew he was secure.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Enter Telemachus and Antinous.

ANTINOUS.

THE king return'd ? So long conceal'd in Ithaca ?
 Æthon the king ? What words can speak my won-

Tel. Yes, my Antinous, 'tis most amazing, [der ?

'Tis all the mighty working of the gods ;

Unsearchable and dark to human eyes :

But, Oh, let me conjure thee by our friendship,

Since to thy faithful breast alone I've trusted

The fatal secret, to preserve it safe,

As thou wouldst do the life of thy Telemachus.

Ant. Wrong not the truth of your devoted slave,

To think he would betray you for whole worlds.

Have you not said it, that your own dear life,

And all your royal race, depends upon it ?

Far from my lips, within my breast I'll keep it ;

Nor breathe it softly to myself alone,

Lest some officious murmuring wind should tell it,

And babbling echoes catch the feeble sound.

Tel. No, thou art true, such have I ever found thee ;

But haste, my friend, and summon to thy aid

What force the shortness of the time allows thee ;

Then with thy swiftest diligence return,

Since as I urg'd to thee before, it may

Import the safety of my royal parents.

Some

Some black design is by these stranger-princes
Contriv'd against the honour of the Queen.

Ant. Ere night a busy rumour ran around,
Of armed parties secretly dispos'd
Between the palace-gardens and the sea ;
Bold Cleon straight, and Arcas I dispatch'd
To search the truth, that known, with haste to raise
And arm our citizens for your defence :
Ere this they have obey'd me ; when I've join'd
The pow'r their diligence has drawn together,
I'll wait you here again upon the instant. [Exit.

Tel. Oh, love ! how are thy precious sweetest minutes
Thus ever cross'd, thus vex'd with disappointments !
Now pride, now fickleness, fantastic quarrels,
And sudden coldness, give us pain by turns ;
Malicious meddling chance is ever busy
To bring us fears, disquiet, and delays ;
And ev'n at last, when after all our waiting,
Eager, we think to snatch the dear-bought bliss,
Ambition calls us to its sullen cares,
And honour stern, impatient of neglect,
Commands us to forget our ease and pleasures,
As if we had been made for nought but toil,
And love were not the bus'ness of our lives.

Enter Eurymachus.

Eur. The Prince yet here ! Twice have I fought, since
To pass in private to the Queen's apartment, [night,
But found him still attending at the door.
What can it mean ?

Tel. It is Semanthe's father !
Ha !—Sure the gods, in pity of our loves,
Have destin'd him to 'scape Ulysses' vengeance.

Eur. How comes it, gentle youth when wine and mirth
Cheer ev'ry heart to-night, and banish care,
I find thee pensively alone, avoiding
The pleasures and companions of thy youth,
And, like the fighting slave of sorrow, wasting
The tedious time in melancholy thought ?

Tel. Behold the ruins of my royal house,
My father's absence, and my mother's grief,
'Then tell me if I have not cause too great
To mourn, to pine away my youth in sadness ?

Eur.

Eur. Our daughter once was wont to share your
Believe me, she has reason to complain, [thoughts;
If you prefer your solitude to her.

While here you stay, disconsolate and musing,
Lonely she sits, the tender-hearted maid,
And kindly thinks of you, and mourns your absence.

Tel. The constant, faithful service of my life,
My days and nights devoted all to her,
Poorly repay the fair Semanthe's goodness :
Yet they are hers, ev'n all my years are hers,
My present youth, my future age, is hers,
All but this night, which here I've sworn to pass,
Revolving many a sad and heavy thought,
And ruminating on my wretched fortunes.

Eur. How, here!—to pass it here!

Tel. Ev'n here, my Lord.

Eur. Fantastic accident!—Whence could this come?

[*Aside.*

Well, Sir, pursue your thoughts. I have some matters
Of great and high import, which, on the instant,
I must deliver to the Queen, your mother.

Tel. Whate'er it be, you must of force delay it
Till morning.

Eur. How, delay it!—'Tis impossible.
But wherefore?—Say.

Tel. The Queen is gone to rest,
Oppress'd and wasted with the toil of sorrows,
Weary as miserable painful hinds,
That labour all the day to get them food,
She seeks some ease, some interval of cares,
From the kind god of sleep, and sweet repose.
Ere she retir'd she left most strict command,
None should approach her till the morning's dawn.

Eur. Whate'er those orders were, I have my reasons
To think myself excepted. And whoe'er
Brought you the message, thro' officious haste,
Mistook the Queen, and has inform'd you wrong.

Tel. Not so, my Lord; for, as I honour truth,
Ev'n from herself did I receive the charge.

Eur. Vexation and delay!—Then 'tis thy own,
Thy error, and thou heard'st not what she said.
I tell thee, Prince, 'tis at her own request,

Her bidding, that at this appointed hour
I wait her here. Detain me then no more
With tedious vain replies : for I must pass.

Tel. Were it to any but Semanthe's father,
That mistress of my reason and my passions,
Who, charming both, makes both submit alike,
Perhaps I should in rougher terms have answer'd ;
But here imperious love demands respect,
Constrains my temper, to my speech gives law,
And I must only say, You cannot pass.

Eur. Ha !—Who shall bar me ?

Tel. With the gentlest words
Which reverence and duty can invent,
I will intreat you not to do a violence,
Where nought is meant to you but worthiest honour.

Eur. Oh, trifling, idle talker !—Know, my purpose
Is not of such a light, fantastic nature,
That I should quit it for a boy's intreaty.
More than my life or empire it imports,
All that good fortune or the gods can do for me,
Depends upon it, and I will have entrance.

Tel. Nay, then 'tis time to speak like what I am,
And tell you, Sir, you must not, nor you sha' not.

Eur. 'Twere safer for thy rash, unthinking youth
To stand the mark of thunder, than to thwart me.
Beware, lest I forget thy mother's tears,
The merit of her soft complying sorrows,
Dreadful in fury lest I rush upon thee,
Grasp thy frail life, and break it like a bubble,
To be dissolv'd, and mix'd with common air.

Tel. Oh, 'tis long since that I have learnt to hold
My life from none, but from the gods who gave it ;
Nor mean to render it on any terms,
Unless those heav'nly donors ask it back.

Eur. Know'st thou what 'tis to tempt a rage like mine ?
But listen to me, and repent thy folly,
This night, this night, ordain'd of old for bliss,
Mark'd from the rest of the revolving year,
And set apart for happiness by fate,
The charming Queen, thy mother, is my bride.

Tel. Confusion ! Curses on the tongue that spoke it !

Eur. To-night she yields, ev'n for thy sake she yields :

The bulk of kingdoms, nay, the world is light,
 When guilt weighs opposite. Oh, would to Heav'n,
 The loss of empire would restore his innocence,
 Restore the fortunes, and the precious lives
 Of thousands, fall'n the victims of ambition !

Enter Laertes.

Ha, Laertes ! most welcome — Well, and have you ? Say,

Laer. O, royal maid ! — [Laertes —

Cristina. Thy looks are doubtful. Speak —

Why art thou silent ? Does he live ?

Laer. He does :

But death, ere night, must fill a long account.

The camp, the country's in confusion ; war

And changes ride upon the hour that hastes

To intercept my tongue — I else could tell

Of virtues hitherto beyond my ken ;

Courage, to which the lion stoops his crest,

Yet grafted upon qualities as soft

As a rock'd infant's meekness ; such as tempts

Against my faith, my country, and allegiance,

To wish thee speed, Gustavus.

Cristina. Then you found him.

Laer. I did ; and warn'd him ; but in vain ; for death

To him appear'd more grateful than to find

His friend's dishonour.

[Laertes !

Cristina. Give me the manner — quick — soft, good

Enter Cristiern, Trollio, Peterfon, Danes, &c.

Crist. Damn'd, double traitor ! Oh, curs'd, false Arvida !

Guard well the Swedish pris'ners ; bind them hard.

Stand to your arms. Bring forth the captives there.

Enter Augusta and Gustava guarded.

Trol. My liege —

Crist. Away ! I'll hear no more of politics.

Fortune ! we will not trust the changeling more,

But wear her girt upon our armed loins,

Or pointed in our grasp.

Enter an Officer.

Off. The foe's at hand.

With gallant shew your thousand Danes rode forth,

But shall return no more. I mark'd the action ;

A band of desp'rate resolute rush'd on them,

Scarce

Scarce numb'ring to a tenth, and in mid way
They clos'd ; the shock was dreadful, nor your Danes
Could bear the madding charge ; a while they stood,
Then shrunk, and broke, and turn'd ; when, lo, behind,
Fast wheeling from the right and left there pour'd,
Who intercepted their return, and, caught
Within the toil, they perish'd.

Crist. 'Tis Gustavus !

No mortal else, not Ammon's boasted son,
Not Cæsar would have dar'd it. Tell me, say,
What numbers in the whole may they amount to ?

Off. About five thousand.

Crist. And no more ?

Off. No more,

That yet appear.

Crist. We count six times their sum.

Haste, soldier, take a trumpet ; tell Gustavus,
We have of terms to offer, and would treat
Touching his mother's ransom ; say, her death,
Suspended by our grace, but waits his answer. [*Exit Off.*
Madam, it should well suit with your authority [*To Augus.*
To check this frenzy in your son. Look to it,
Or, by the saints, this hour's your last of life.

Augus. Come, my Gustava ; comé, my little captive ;
We shall be free ; our tyrant is grown kind ;
And for these chains that bind thy pretty arms,
The golden cherubim shall lend thee wings,
And thou shalt mount amid the smiling choir
Of little heav'nly songsters, like thyself,
All rob'd in innocence.

Gustava. Will you go, mother ?

Augus. So help me, mercy ! Yes, I'll go, my child ;
And I will give thee to thy father's fondness,
And to the arms of all thy royal race
In heav'n, who sit on thrones, with loves, and joys,
And pleasures smiling round.

Crist. Is this my answer ?

Come forth, ye ministers of death, come forth.

Enter Ruffians, who seize Augusta and Gustava.

Pluck them asunder. We shall prove you, lady.
'Tis my damn'd lot, thus ever to be cross'd
With rank blown pride, and insolence eternal.

Sem. What says my father?—No—it is impossible!
He could not, would not—for Semanthe's sake.

Enter Telemachus.

Tel. Alas! there is none near; no help—Semanthe!

[Crying out.]

Eur. And see, he bears the trophy of his conquest;
Behold his sword yet reeking with my blood;
Then doubt no more, nor ask whom thou shouldst curse;
It is Telemachus; on whom revenge me,
But on Telemachus?—Why do I leave thee
A helpless orphan in a foreign land,
But for Telemachus?—Who tears thee from me?
Telemachus. Why is thy king and father
Stretch'd on the earth a cold and lifeless corse,
Inglorious and forgotten?—Oh, Telemachus! *[Dies.]*

Sem. Cruel!—unkind and cruel!—

[She faints, and falls upon the body of Eurymachus.]

Tel. She faints!

Her cheeks are cold, and the last leaden sleep
Hangs heavy on her lids—Wake, wake, Semanthe!
Oh, let me raise thee from this seat of death!

[Raising her up, and supporting her in his arms.]

Lift up thy eyes. Wilt thou not speak to me?

Sem. Let me forget the use of ev'ry sense,
Let me not see, nor hear; nor speak again,
After that fight, and those most dreadful sounds.
Where am I now? What, lodg'd within thy arms!
Stand off, and let me fly from thee for ever,
Swifter than lightning, winds, or winged time;
Fly from thee till there be whole worlds to part us,
Till Nature fix her barriers to divide us,
Her frozen regions, and her burning zones,
Till danger, death and hell do stand betwixt us,
And make it fate that we shall never meet.

Tel. 'Tis just, I own thy rage is just, Semanthe;
Each fatal circumstance is strong against me.
Then if thy heart severely is resolv'd
Never to listen when I plead for mercy,
Tho' piety and honour join with love,
And humbly at thy feet make intercession,
If thou art deaf to all, then this alone
Is left me, to receive my doom, and die.

Sem.

Sem. Are love, are piety, and honour, parricides?
 Are they like thee? Do they delight in blood?
 Oh, no! celestial sweetness dwells with them,
 Friendly forgiveness, gentleness and peace,
 Mercy and joy; but thou hast violated
 The sacred train, brought murder in amongst them;
 And see, displeas'd, to heav'n they take their flight,
 And have abandon'd thee and me for ever.

Tel. If sudden fury have not chang'd thee quite,
 If there be any of Semanthe left,
 One tender thought of that dear maid remaining,
 Yet, I conjure thee, hear me.

Sem. 'Tis in vain;
 And that known voice can never charm me more.

Tel. Be witness for me, Heav'n, with what reluctance
 My hand was lifted for this fatal stroke.
 With injuries which manhood could not brook,
 With violence, with proud insulting scorn,
 And ignominious threat'nings, was I urg'd;
 Long, long I strove with rising indignation,
 And long repress'd my swelling, youthful rage;
 I groan'd, and felt an agony within:
 'Twas hard indeed; but to myself I said,
 It is Semanthe's father, and I'll bear it. [sufferings?

Sem. And couldst thou do no more? Call'st thou these
 These short, tumultuous, momentary passions?
 What would not I have borne for thee, thou cruel one?
 For thee; so fondly was my heart set on thee,
 Forgetful of my tender, helpless sex,
 I would have wander'd over the wide world,
 Known all calamities and all distresses,
 Sicknes and hunger, cold and bitter want;
 For thee retir'd within some gloomy cave,
 I would have wasted all my days in weeping,
 And liv'd and dy'd a wretch, to make thee happy;
 Till I had been a story to posterity,
 Till maids, in after-times, had said, behold
 How much she suffer'd for the man she lov'd.

Tel. And is there any one, the most afflicting
 Of all those miseries mankind is born to,
 Which for thy sake I would refuse?—But, Oh,
 Mine was a harder, a severer task!

The Queen, my mother, trusted to my charge,
My royal father's honour, and my own,
'The pledges of eternal fame, or infamy,
United urg'd, and call'd upon my sword.

Sem. What is this vain, fantastic pageant, honour,
This busy, angry thing, that scatters discord
Amongst the mighty princes of the earth,
And sets the madding nations in an uproar?
But let it be the worship of the great;
Well hast thou warn'd me, and I'll make it mine:
Yes, Prince, its dread command shall be obey'd;
Our Samian arms shall pour destruction on you,
Your yellow harvests and your towns shall blaze,
The sword shall rage, and universal wailings
Be heard amongst the mothers of your Ithaca,
'Till war itself grow weary, and relent,
And that poor bleeding King be well reveng'd.

Tel. Haste then, and let the trumpet found to arms,
Semanthe's vengeance shall not be delay'd;
Prepare for slaughter and wide-wasting ruin,
Prepare to feel her wrath, ye wretched Ithacans!
Lift not a sword, nor bend a bow against her,
But all, like me, with low submission meet her,
And let us yield up our devoted lives,
Nor once implore her mercy; for, alas!
Cruel Semanthe has forgot to pardon:
For blood, destruction, and revenge she calls,
And gentleness and love are strangers to her. [thought!

Sem. Love! didst thou speak of love?—Oh, ill-tim'd
Behold it there! behold the love thou bear'st me!

[Pointing to the body of Eurymachus.

Behold that, that!—more dreadful than Medusa;
It drives my soul back to her inmost seats,
And freezes ev'ry stiff'ning limb to marble.
Seest thou that gaping wound, and that black blood
Congealing on that pale, that ashy breast?
Then mark the face—how pain and rage, with all
The agonies of death, sit fresh upon it.
This was my father—Was there none on earth,
No hand but thine?—

Tel. Within my own sad heart
I felt the steel, before it reach'd to his.

How much more happy is his lot? The sleep
Of death is on him, and he is in peace;
While I, condemn'd to live, must mourn for him,
Mourn for myself, and, to compleat my woes,
Feel all thy pains redoubled on Telemachus.

Sem. I know thou hat'st me, and that deadly blow
Was meant to do a murder on Semanthe.

But, Oh, it needed not! for thy unkindness
Had been as fatal to me as thy sword.

If one cold look, one angry word, had told me
That thou wert chang'd, and I was grown a burthen to
I should have understood thy cruel purpose, [thee,
Sat down to weep, and broke my heart, and dy'd.

Tel. It is too much, and I will bear no more.

Oh, thou unjust, thou lovely false accuser!
How hast thou wrong'd my tender, faithful love!

In spite of all these horrors of my guilt,
And that malignant fate that doom'd me to it,

In spite of all, I will appeal to thee,

Ev'n to thyself, inhuman as thou art,

If ever maid was yet belov'd before thee,

With such heart-aching, eager, anxious fondness,

As that with which my soul desires my dear Semanthe?

Sem. Detested be the name of love for ever!

Henceforth let easy maids be warn'd by me,

No more to trust your breasts that heave with sighing,

Your moving accents, and your melting eyes;

Whene'er you boast your truth, then let them fly you,

Then scorn you, for 'tis then you mean deceiving:

If yet there should some fond believer be,

Let the false man betray the wretch, like thee;

Like thee, the lost, repenting fool disclaim,

For crowns, ambition, and your idol, fame;

When warm, when languishing with sweet delight,

Wishing she meets him, may he blast her sight

With such a murder, on her bridal night. [Exit.]

Tel. Now arm thee for the conflict, Oh, my soul!

And see how thou canst bear Semanthe's loss;

For she is lost—most certain—gone irrevocable.

Mentor nor Æthon now, my king, my father,

Shall need t' upbraid me with th' unhappy passion—

Ha! that has wak'd a thought—'Tis certain so;

And

And this is all the work of cruel policy.
 The danger of the Queen was from Eurymachus,
 Therefore my sword was chosen to oppose it,
 That it might cut the bands of love afunder.
 Oh, dreamer that I was!

Enter Antinous, Cleon, and Arcas with Soldiers.

Ant. My Lord, where are you?
 Thus to his son, our King, the great Ulysses,
 By me commands: Your royal mother's danger
 Is now no more, since all the rival princes
 Are in the hall beset, and ev'n this moment
 Revenge and slaughter are let loose among them:
 Haste then to join your godlike father's arms,
 To bring your pious valour to his aid,
 And share the conquest and the glory with him.

Tel. Ha! com'st thou from the hall, Antinous?

Ant. Ev'n now, my Lord. As I was hastening hither,
 It was my chance to meet my royal master;
 Eager with joy, I threw me at his feet,
 With wond'rous grace he rais'd me and embrac'd me,
 Then bid me fly to bear his orders to you.
 By the loud cries, the shouts, and clash of arms,
 Which, just as I had left him, struck my ear,
 I guess ere this the combat is begun.

Tel. Yes, yes, my friend, that danger of the Queen
 Is now no more. However, be thou near,
 To guard her, to support her, lest the terrors
 Of this tumultuous, this most dreadful night,
 May shake her soul. I will obey the King,
 And gladly lose the life he gave me, for him.
 And since the pleasure of my days is lost,
 Since my youth's dearest, only hopes are cross'd,
 Careless of all, I'll rush into the war;
 Provoke the lifted sword, and pointed spear,
 Till, all o'er wounds, I sink amidst the slain,
 And bless the friendly hand that rids me of my pain.

[*Exit Tel.*

Cleon. Behold, my Lord, and wonder here with us;
 The Samian King——

Ant. Eurymachus!——'Tis he.
 Surprising accident!—Whence came this blow?

But

But 'tis no matter, since it makes for us,
 Nor have we time to waste in vain enquiry ;
 Let it suffice that we have lost an enemy.
 Hasten to the Queen, my Cleon, and persuade her
 To seek her safety with us in the city :
 If she refuse, bear her away by force.
 Do you attend him.

[*To the Soldiers.*]

Arc. Had you ta'en my counsel,
 The Prince should not have 'scap'd us.

Ant. Arcas, no !
 A life like his is but a single stake,
 Unworthy the contention it might cost.
 Gaining the Queen, I have whate'er I wish.
 Fear of the Samians and the subtle King,
 Forbade my coming with a stronger power,
 Lest they had ta'en th' alarm, and turn'd upon us :
 'Therefore I held it safer by a wife
 'To work upon the youth, and send him hence,
 And that way gain admittance to his mother.

Arc. Our Ithacans, who give the King for lost,
 Shall deem this tale of his return a fable ;
 Or tho' they should believe it, yet will join us,
 And with united arms assist our cause.
 Why do we linger then ?—Heard you that cry ?

[*Cry of women within.*]

Successful Cleon, of his prey possess'd,
 Leads us the way, and hastens to the city.

Ant. Come on, and let the crafty fam'd Ulysses
 Repine and rage, by happier frauds excell'd.
 Let the forsaken husband vainly mourn
 His tedious labours, and his late return ;
 In vain to Pallas and to Jove complain,
 That Troy and Hector are reviv'd again.
 Possess'd, like happy Paris, of the fair,
 I'll lengthen out my joys with ten years war,
 And think the rest of life beneath a lover's care.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE, *the City.*

Enter severally Mentor and Eumæus.

EUMÆUS.

WHERE is the joy, the boast of conquest now?
 In vain we triumph o'er our foreign tyrants,
 So soon to perish, by domestic foes.
 Why shone the great Ulysses dreadful, fierce
 As Mars, and mighty as Phlegræan Jove?
 Why reeks your marble pavement with the slaughter
 Of rival kings, that fell beneath his sword,
 Victims to injur'd honour and revenge,
 Since, by the fatal error of Telemachus,
 The prize for which we fought, the Queen, is lost,
 Is yielded up a prey to false Antinous?

Men. He trusted in the holy name of friendship,
 And, conscious of his own uprightnes, thought
 The man whom he had plac'd so near his heart
 Had shar'd as well his virtues as his love.

Eum. How bears the Prince this chance?

Men. Alas, Eumæus!

His griefs have rent my aged heart asunder.
 Stretch'd on the damp unwholsome earth he lies,
 Nor had my pray'rs or tears the power to raise him;
 Now motionless as death his eyes are fix'd,
 And then anon he starts and casts them upwards,
 And groaning, cries, I am th' accurs'd of Heav'n.
 My mother! my Semanthe, and my mother!

Eum. The King, whose equal temper, like the gods,
 Was ever calm and constant to itself,
 Struck with the sudden, unexpected evil,
 Was mov'd to rage, and chid him from his sight.
 But now returning to the father's fondness,
 He bade me seek him out, speak comfort to him,
 And bring him to his arms.

Men. Where have you left
 Our royal master?

Eum. Near the palace gate,
 Attended by those few, those faithful few,

Who

Who dare be loyal at a time like this,
When ev'n their utmost hope is but to die for him.

Men. That last relief, that refuge of despair,
Is all I fear is left us — From the city,
Each moment brings the growing danger nearer ;
There's not a man in Ithaca but arms ;
A thousand blazing fires make bright the streets,
Huge gabbling crowds gather, and roll along,
Like roaring seas that enter at a breach ;
The neighb'ring rocks, the woods, the hills, the dales,
Ring with the deaf'ning sound, while bold rebellion
With impious peals of acclamation greets
Her trait'rous chief, Antinous — Where is then
One glimpse of safety, when we hardly number
Our friends a twentieth part of this fierce multitude ?

Eum. Yet more, the Samians, by whose arms assisted
We late prevail'd against the riotous wooers,
By some sinister chance have learnt the fate
Of their dead monarch, and call loud for vengeance :
With cloudy brows the fullen captains gather
In murm'ring crowds around their weeping princess,
As if they waited from her mournful lips
The signal for destruction ; from her sorrows
Catching new matter to encrease their rage,
And vowing to repay her tears with blood.
But see, she comes, attended with her guard.

Men. Retire, and let us haste to seek the Prince ;
This danger threatens him. If he should meet them,
His piety would be repaid with death,
Nor could his youth or godlike courage save him,
Unequally oppress'd, and crush'd by numbers.

[*Exeunt Mentor and Eumæus.*

*Enter two Samian Captains and Soldiers, some bearing the
body of Eurymachus ; Semanthe following with Officers
and Attendants.*

Sem. Ye valiant Samian chiefs, ye faithful followers
Of your unhappy king, justly perform
Your pious office to his sacred relics ;
Bear to your fleet his pale, his bloody corse,
Nor let his discontented ghost repine,

To think his injur'd ashes shall be mix'd
 With the detested earth of cruel Ithaca. [thee,
1 Capt. Oh, royal maid! whose tears look lovely on
 Whose cares the gods shall favour and reward,
 Queen of our Samos now, to whom we offer
 Our humble homage, to whose just command
 We vow obedience, suffer not the seaman
 T' unfurl his sails, or call the winds to swell them,
 Till the fierce soldier have indulg'd his rage,
 Till from the curled darlings of their youth,
 And from the fairest of their virgin daughters,
 We've chose a thousand victims for a sacrifice,
 T' appease the manes of our murder'd lord. [d'rer?

Sem. Now, now, Semanthe, wilt thou name the mur-
 Wilt thou direct their vengeance where to strike? [*Aside.*
 Oh; my sad heart!—Haste to dispose in safety
 Your venerable load; and if you lov'd him,
 If you remember what he once was to you,
 How great, how good and gracious, yield this proof
 Of early faith and duty to his daughter,
 Restrain the soldiers' fury, till I name
 The wretch by whom my royal father fell.
 Let some attend the body to the shore,
 The rest be near and wait me.

[*Exeunt some with the body; the rest retire within the scene, and wait as at a distance.*

Enter at the other door Telemachus.

Tel. Why was I born? Why sent into the world,
 Ordain'd for mischievous misdeeds, and fated
 To be the curse of them that gave me being?
 Why was this mass ta'en from the heap of matter,
 Where innocent and senseless it had rested,
 To be indu'd with form, and vex'd with motion?
 How happy had it been for all that know me,
 If barrenness had bless'd my mother's bed!
 Nor had she been dishonour'd then, nor lost,
 Nor curs'd the fatal hour in which she bore me:
 Love had not been offended for Semanthe,
 Nor had that fair-one known a father's loss.

Sem. What kind companion of Semanthe's woes
 Is that, who, wand'ring in this dreadful night,

Sighs out her name with such a mournful accent ?
 Ha ! — but thou art Telemachus — Let darkness
 Still spread her gloomy mantle o'er thy visage,
 And hide thee from these weeping eyes for ever.

Tel. Yes, veil thy eyes, or turn them far from me ;
 For who can take delight to gaze on misery ?
 Fly from the moan, the cry of the afflicted,
 From the complaining of a wounded spirit,
 Lest my contagious griefs take hold on thee,
 And ev'ry groan I utter pierce thy heart.

Sem. Oh, soft enchanting sorrows ! Never was
 The voice of mourning half so sweet — Oh, who
 Can listen to the sound, and not be mov'd,
 Nor bear a part, like me, and share in all his pain ? [*Aside.*

Tel. But if perhaps thy fellow-creature's sufferings
 Are grown a pleasure to thee, (for, alas !
 Much art thou alter'd) then in me behold
 More than enough to satisfy thy cruelty ;
 Behold me here the scorn, the easy prize,
 Of a protesting, faithless, villain friend.
 I have betray'd my mother, I betray'd her,
 Ev'n I, her son, whom with so many cares
 She nurs'd and fondled in her tender bosom.
 Would I had dy'd before I saw this day !
 I left her, I forsook her in distress,
 And gave her to the mercy of a ravisher.

Sem. Yes, I have heard, with grief of mind redoubled,
 The too hard fortune of the pious Queen ;
 For her my eyes enlarge and swell their streams,
 Tho' well thou know'st what cause they had before
 To lavish all their tears. I pity her,
 I mourn her injur'd viriue : but for thee,
 Whate'er the righteous gods have made thee suffer,
 Just is the doom, and equal to thy crimes.

Tel. 'Tis justice all, and see I bow me down
 With patience and submission to the blow ;
 Nor is it fit that such a wretch as I am
 Should walk with face erect upon the earth,
 And hold society with man — Oh, therefore
 Let me conjure thee by those tender ties
 Which held us once, when I was dear to thee,
 And thou to me, as life to living creatures,

Or light and heat to universal nature,
 The comfort and condition of its being,
 Complete th' imperfect vengeance of the gods,
 Call forth the valiant Samians to thy aid,
 Bid them strike here, and here revenge——

Sem. Oh, hold!

Stay thy rash tongue, nor let it speak of horrors
 That may be fatal to——

Tel. What mean'st thou?

Sem. Something

For which I want a name——Is there none near?
 No conscious ear to catch the guilty sound?
 None to upbraid my weakness, call me parricide,
 And charge me as consenting to the murder?
 For, Oh, my shame, my shame! I must confess it,
 Tho' piety and honour urg'd me on,
 Tho' rage and grief had wrought me to distraction,
 I durst not, could not, would not once accuse thee.

Tel. And wherefore art thou merciful in vain?

Oh, do not load me with that burthen, life,
 Unless thou give me love, to cheer my labours.
 Tell me, Semanthe, is it, is it thus [ing,
 The bride and bridegroom meet? Are tears and mourn-
 This bitterness of grief, and these lamentings,
 Are these the portion of our nuptial night?

Sem. But thou, thou only didst prevent the joy,
 'Tis thou hast turn'd the blessing to a curse:
 Live, therefore, live, and be, if it be possible,
 As great a wretch as thou hast made Semanthe.

Tel. It shall be so; I will be faithful to thee,
 For days, for months, for years, I will be miserable,
 Protract my suff'rings ev'n to hoary age,
 And linger out a tedious life in pain;
 In spite of sickness and a broken heart,
 I will endure for ages to obey thee.

Sem. Oh, never shalt thou know sorrows like mine!
 Never despair, never be curs'd as I am.
 Yes, I will open my afflicted breast,
 And sadly shew thee ev'ry secret pain,
 Tho' hell and darkness with new monsters teem,
 Tho' furies, hideous to behold, ascend,
 Toss their infernal flames, and yell around me;

Tho'

Tho' my offended father's angry ghost
Should rise all pale and bloody just before me,
Till my hair started up, my sight were blasted,
And ev'ry trembling fibre shook with horror;
Yet—yet—Oh, yet, I must confess I love thee!

Tel. Then let our envious stars oppose in vain
Their baleful influence, to thwart our joys;
My love shall get the better of our fate,
Prevent the malice of that hard decree,
'That seem'd to doom us to eternal sorrows;
And yet in spite of all we will be happy.

Sem. Let not that vain, that faithless hope deceive thee,
For 'tis resolv'd, 'tis certainly decreed,
Fix'd as that law by which imperial Jove,
According to his prescience and his pow'r,
Ordains the sons of men to good or evil;
'Tis certain, ev'n our love, and all the mis'ries
Which must attend that love, are not more certain,
Than that this moment we must part for ever.

Tel. How! Part for ever? That's a way indeed
To make us miserable. Is there none,
No other sad alternative of grief,
No other choice but this?—What, must we part for ever?

Sem. Oh, sigh not, nor complain! Is not thy hand
Stain'd with my father's blood? Justice and nature,
The gods demand it, and we must obey:
Yes, I must go, the pressing minutes call me,
Where these fond eyes shall never see thee more,
No more with languishing delight gaze on thee,
Feed on thy face, and fill my heart with pleasure,
Where day and night shall follow one another,
Tedious alike and irksome, and alike
Wasted in weary loneliness and weeping.

Tel. Here then, my soul, take thy farewell of happiness;
That and Semanthe fly together from thee:
Henceforth renounce all commerce with the world,
Nor hear, nor see, nor once regard what passes.
Let mighty kings contend, ambitious youth
Arm for the battle, seasons come and go,
Spring, summer, autumn, with their fruitful pleasures,
And winter with its silver frost, let Nature
Display in vain her various pomp before thee,

'Tis wretched all, 'tis all not worth thy care,
'Tis all a wilderness, without Semanthe.

Sem. One last, one guilty proof, how much I love thee;
(Forgive it, gods!) Ceraunus and the Samians
Shall bring thee from me, ere I part from Ithaca,
'That done, I'll haste, I'll fly, as I have sworn,
For thy lov'd sake, far from the sight of man,
Fly to the pathless wilds, and sacred shades,
Where Dryads and the mountain-nymphs resort,
There beg the rural deities to pity me,
To end my woes, and let me on their hills,
Like Cyparissus, grow a mournful tree,
Or melt, like weeping Byblis, to a fountain.

Tel. Since fate divides us then, since I must lose thee,
For pity's sake, for love's, Oh, suffer me,
Thus languishing, thus dying, to approach thee,
And sigh my last adieu upon thy bosom!
Permit me, thus, to fold thee in my arms,
To press thee to my heart, to taste thy sweets,
Thus pant, and thus grow giddy with delight.
Thus for my last of moments gaze upon thee,
'Thou best, thou only joy—thou lost Semanthe!

Sem. For ever I could listen; but the gods,
The cruel gods, forbid, and thus they part us.
Remember, Oh, remember me, Telemachus!
Perhaps thou wilt forget me; but no matter;
I will be true to thee, preserve thee ever
'The sad companion of this faithful breast,
While life and thought remain; and when at last
I feel the icy hand of death prevail,
My heart-strings break, and all my senses fail,
I'll fix thy image in my closing eye,
Sigh thy dear name, then lay me down and die. [Exit.

Tel. And whither wilt thou wander, thou forlorn,
Abandon'd wretch?—The King thy father comes;
Fly from his angry frown, no matter whither;
Seek for the darkest covert of the night,
Seek out for death, and see if that can hide thee,
If there be any refuge thou canst prove,
Safe from pursuing sorrow, shame, and anxious love.

[Exit.

Enter

Enter Ulysses, Eumæus, and Attendants.

Ulyss. To doubt if there be justice with the gods,
Or if they care for aught below, were impious.
Oft have I try'd, and ever found them faithful ;
In all the various perils of my life,
In battles, in the midst of flaming Troy,
In stormy seas, in those dread regions where
Swarthy Cimmerians have their dark abode,
Divided from this world, and borderers on hell,
Ev'n there the providence of Jove was with me,
Defended, cheer'd, and bore me thro' the danger :
Nor is his pow'r, nor is my virtue less,
That I should fear this rude, tumultuous herd.

Eum. So feeble is our band, so few our friends,
We hope not safety from ourselves, but thee ;
In thee, our king, we trust, in thee, our hero,
Favour'd of Heav'n, in all thy wars victorious.
But see where proud rebellion comes against thee, [*Shout.*
Securely fierce, and breathing bold defiance.
Now let our courage and our faith be try'd ;
And if, unequal to thy great example,
We cannot conquer like thee, yet we can die for thee.

*Shout, drums, and trumpets ; then enter Antinous, Cleon,
and Soldiers.*

Ant. What bold invader of our laws and freedom,
Usurps the sacred name of king in Ithaca ?
Who dares to play the tyrant in our state,
And in despite of hospitable Jove,
Defames our island with the blood of strangers ?

Ulyss. Have you forgot me then, you men of Ithaca ?
Did I for this, amongst the Grecian heroes,
Go forth to battle in my country's cause ?
Have I by arms and by successful counsels
Deserv'd a name from Asia's wealthy shores
Ev'n to the western ocean, to those bounds
That mark the great Alcides' utmost labours,
And am I yet a stranger here——at home ? [*tions,*

Ant. And wherefore didst thou leave those distant na-
Thro' which thy name and mighty deeds were spread ?
We never sought to know thee, and now known,

Regard thee not, unless it be to punish
Thy violation of our public peace.

Ulyss. And dost thou dare, dost thou, audacious slave!
Thou rash misleader of this giddy crowd,
Dost thou presume to match thyself with me,
To judge between a monarch and his people?
If Heav'n had not appointed me thy master,
Yet it had made me something more than thou art,
Then when it made me what I am—Ulysses!

Ant. Then be Ulysses! echo it again,
And see what homage these will pay the sound:

[*Pointing to the Soldiers.*]

Tell them the story of your Trojan wars,
How Hector drove you headlong to the shore,
And threw his hostile fires amidst your fleet;
Then mark with what applause they will receive thee.
Say, countrymen, will you revenge the princes
This wanderer has slain, and join with me?

Omnes. Antinous! Antinous!

Ant. What of your monarch?

Omnes. Drive him out to banishment. [careless,

Ulyss. Were there no gods in heav'n, or were they
And Jove had long forgot to wield his thunder,
And dart destruction down on crimes like thine;
Yet, traitor, hope not thou to 'scape from justice,
Nor let rebellious numbers swell thy pride;
For know, Ulysses is alone sufficient
To punish thee, and on thy perjurd head
Revenge the wrongs of love and injurd majesty:

Ant. And see, I stand prepar'd to meet thy vengeance;
Exert thy kingly pow'r, and summon all
Thy useful arts and courage to thy aid:
And since thy faithful Diomedé is absent,
Since valiant Ajax, with his seven-fold shield,
No more shall interpose 'twixt thee and danger,
Invoke those friendly gods, whose care thou art,
And let them save thee, now assert thy cause,
And render back to thy despairing arms
The beautiful Queen, whom, in despite of them
And thee, this happy night I made my prize.

Ulyss. Hear this, ye gods! he triumphs in the rape.
Most glorious villain!—But we pause too long.

On then, and tempt our fate, my gallant friends,
 From this desier of the gods, this monster;
 Let us redeem my Queen, or die together;
 And, equal to our great forefathers' fame,
 Descend and join those demi-gods of Greece,
 Who with their blood enrich'd the Dardan plains,
 To vindicate a husband's sacred right. [Shout;

Enter Arcas wounded.

Ant. What means that sudden thunder-clap of tumult?
 Art thou not Arcas?—Thou art faint and bloody.

Arc. I have paid you the last office of my friendship;
 Scarce have I breath enough to speak your danger:
 The furious Samians, led by young Telemachus,
 Resistless; fierce, and bearing all before them,
 Have from the castle forc'd the captive Queen;
 Fir'd with success, they drive our fainting troops,
 And hither urge their way with threat'ning cries,
 Loudly demanding your devoted head,
 A just atonement for their murder'd lord.

Ulyss. Celestial pow'rs! ye guardians of the just!
 This wond'rous work is yours, and yours be all the praise.

Ant. Confusion!—Wherefore didst thou not proclaim
 My innocence, and warn them of their error?

Arc. Behold these wounds, through which my parting
 Is hastening forth, and judge my truth by them. [soul

Whate'er I could, I urg'd in thy defence;
 But all was vain: with clamorous impatience,
 They broke upon my speech, and swore 'twas false;
 Their Queen, the fair Semanthe, had accus'd thee,
 And fix'd her royal father's death on thee.

If any way be left yet, haste and fly;
 Th' inconstant, faithless Ithacans join with them,
 And all is lost—What dearer pledge than life
 Can friendship ask? Behold I give it for thee. [Dies.

[Shout.

Ulyss. They come! Success and happiness attend us!
 Pallas, and my victorious son, fight for us!

Ant. Thou and thy gods at last have got the better.

[To Ulysses.

Yet know, I scorn to fly; that great ambition
 That bid me first aspire to love and empire,
 Still brightly burns, and animates my soul.

Be true, my sword, and let me fall reveng'd,
And I'll forgive ill fortune all besides.

[Ulysses, Antinous, and their parties, fight.

Enter Telemachus, Ceraunus, and Samian soldiers; they join Ulysses, and drive Antinous, Cleon, and the rest off the stage. Then enter at one door Ulysses, at the other the Queen, Mentor, and Attendants.

Ulyss. My Queen! my love!

[Embracing.

Qu. My hero! my Ulysses!

Once more thou art restor'd, once more I hold thee!
At length the gods have prov'd us to the utmost,
Are satisfy'd with what we have endur'd,
And never will afflict nor part us more.
'Tis not in words to tell thee what I've felt,
The sorrows and the fears; ev'n yet I tremble;
Ev'n yet the fierce ideas shock my soul,
And hardly yield to wonder and to joy.

Men. A turn so happy, and so unexpected,
None but those over-ruling pow'rs who caus'd it
Could have foreseen. The beauteous Samian Princess,
Within whose gentle breast revenge and tenderness
Long stov'd, and long maintain'd a doubtful conflict,
At length was vanquish'd by prevailing love,
And, happily, to save the Prince, imputed
To false Antinous her father's death.
Heav'n has approv'd the fraud of fond affection,
The just deceit, a falshood fair as truth,
Since 'tis to that alone we owe our safety.

Enter Telemachus.

Tel. Here let me kneel, and with my tears atone

[Kneeling.

The rash offences of my heedless youth; [U. raises him.
Here offer the first trophies of my sword,
And once more hail my father King of Ithaca.
Antinous, the rebel faction's chief,
Is now no more, and your repenting people
Wait with unired homage to receive you;
The strangers too, to whom we owe our conquest,
Haste to embark, and set their swelling sails,
To bear the sad Semanthe back to Samos.

Joy!

Joy, like the cheerful morning, dawns on all,
And none but your unhappy son shall mourn.

Ulyss. Like thee, the pangs of parting love I've known,
My heart like thine has bled——But, Oh, my son!
Sigh not, nor of the common lot complain;
Thou, that art born a man, art born to pain:
For proof, behold my tedious twenty years,
All spent in toil, and exercis'd in cares.
'Tis true, the gracious gods are kind at last,
And well reward me here for all my sorrows past.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by SEMANTHE.

JUST going to take water, at the stairs
 I stopp'd, and came again to beg your pray'rs;
 You see how ill my love has been repaid,
 That I am likè to live and die a maid;
 Poetic rules and justice to maintain,
 I to the woods am order'd back again,
 To Madam Cynthia and her virgin train.
 'Tis an uncomfortable life they lead;
 Instead of quilts and down, the sylvan bed,
 With skins of beasts, with leaves and moss, is spread;
 No morning toilets do their chambers grace,
 Where famous pearl cosmetics find a place,
 With powder for the teeth, and plaister for the face.
 But in defiance of complexion, they,
 Like arrant housewives, rise by break of day,
 Cut a brown crust, saddle their nags, and mounting,
 In scorn of the green-sickness, ride a hunting.
 Your sal, and hartshorn drops, they deal not in;
 They have no vapours, nor no witty spleen.
 No coffee to be had; and I am told,
 As to the tea they drink, 'tis mostly cold.
 For conversation, nothing can be worse,
 'Tis all amongst themselves, and that's the curse;
 One topic there, as here, does seldom fail,
 We women rarely want a theme to rail;
 But, bating that one pleasure of backbiting,
 There is no earthly thing they can delight in.
 There are no Indian houses to drop in,
 And fancy stuffs, and chuse a pretty screen,
 To while away an hour or so—I swear
 These cups are pretty, but they're deadly dear;
 And if some unexpected friend appear,
 The dev'l!—Who could have thought to meet you here?
 We should but very badly entertain
 You that delight in toasting and champagne.
 But keep your tender persons safe at home;
 We know you hate hard riding: but if some
 Tough, honest country fox-hunter would come,
 Visit our goddess, and her maiden court,
 'Tis ten to one, but we may shew him sport.





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